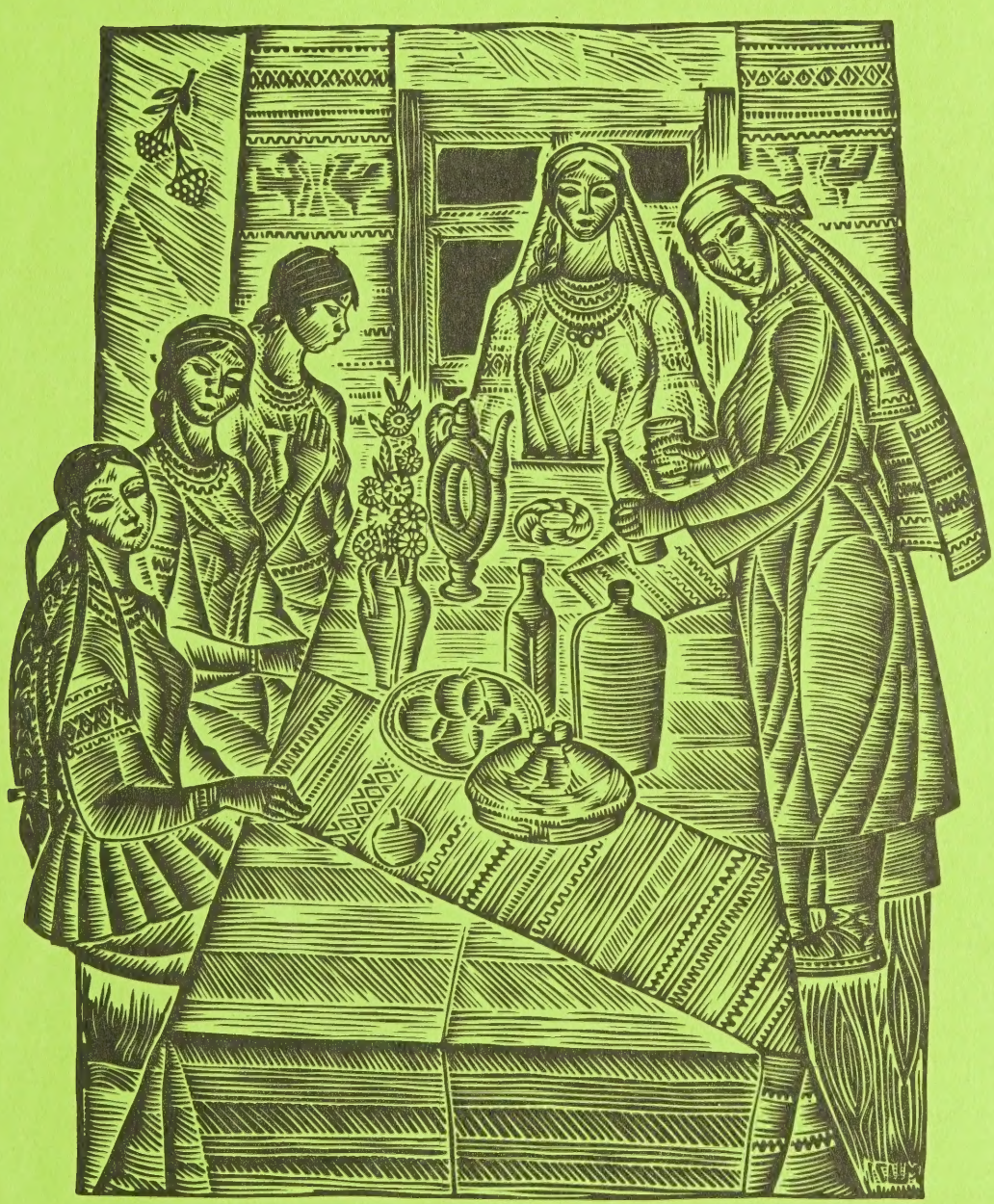
CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage



Vol. VII, No. 1 Spring, 1984

FROM THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Education is essentially a process of communication. As we scurry to meet the deadline for this issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* we are struck by three thoughts: (1) how much there is to learn about our people; (2) how many others are out there like us; and (3) how many sources there are from which to seek information. The mail reaching Dr. Krafcik's office in the past six months has been extensive. We have material from people in Oregon, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Užhorod, Bratislava, and Kiev. As we begin our seventh year of publication, we thought it would be good to share some of the correspondence.

Dear Editor:

I am most impressed and most happy to have received your introductory issue. I have always (had) a great and deep interest in my Ruthenian-Ukrainian heritage. Enclosed is a check for my 1983 subscription. In the future I intend to ask for the back issues.

Sister Mary Faith Vetovich, O.P.
Newark, New Jersey

Dear Editors:

I want you to know I am thrilled with the newsletter and the other publications you send out. My parents are from the village of Dubrovka near Užhorod, and I grew up speaking "po-našomu" in Brooklyn. . . . I have been excited from the time I saw an announcement for the newsletter. . . and also in reading each back issue. You have helped me recover my own heritage.

George E. Spontak
Montpelier, Vermont

Dear Editor:

First of all, you will find a check to renew my subscription to the *Carpatho-Rusyn American.* I keep them all in a special three-ring binder. Perhaps some day my children will take some interest in their heritage. . . . In the meantime, I find this little periodical interesting and informative. Keep up the good work!

I wanted you to know that I have taken the first step in the long journey back *home*! My family came from an area that is now on the Soviet side, so I am obliged to go through the Red Cross in Moscow to find my kin.

If you are interested, some day I will tell you about our Old Believer Community here in Oregon. Your friend in the West.

John Hudanish
Woodburn, Oregon

Dear Mr. Hudanish: On behalf of Dr. Krafcik and the staff, we invite you to keep us informed of the progress you make locating your family. Also note of Patricia Onufrak's "Search for Roots" in this issue, which deals with research possibilities.

Dear Editor:

I am inquiring about a book, published by your center, about the churches of the Carpathian Region . . . my parents (now dead) came from this area prior to 1910. I know very little about it and would like to know more.

I remember, as a child in school, being hard pressed to explain what I was ethnically. My parents did not consider themselves Poles, and heaven forbid you should say they were Austrians. They were Carpatho-Rus, and that was that.

I often wondered how this sect of beautiful, pious people came to be in this hidden area. . . . They spoke of it with such reverence, I thought it must be God's Country. . . . I'm happy to hear there is now a research center for the study of these fascinating people.

Dorothy (Burdziak) Crossan
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Editorial Staff:

Enclosed you will find $5.00 as a renewal for my subscription.

As a Ukrainian I find many of the views expressed in this quarterly very interesting. I am learning much. One thing is clear: the Carpatho-Rusyn/Ukrainian relationship is quite complex. Dialogue and exchange of ideas are the only way to find some sort of meeting ground.

Dr. Larissa Janiw-Fontana
Bethesda, Maryland

Dear Patricia:

I received the back issues of *Carpatho-Rusyn American* in the mail this past week. In the midst of many things that needed doing, the urge to sit and read through all of them was strong enough to put all things aside. That's exactly what I did.

You can't imagine the flood of tears and memories that washed over me as I read and read. Allow me to explain . . .

I was particularly overcome by the Fall 1982 issue in which you described the thoughts and feelings you experienced on your journey to the "old country" to meet your family there. Of special importance to me was that you travelled to Ruská Vol'a and Čirč, as that is the area from which my maternal ancestors came.

Betty Ann Kvartek
Canonsburg, Pennsylvania

The writer of this last letter wrote another six pages describing how her "baba" came to this country, and the trials her family endured on the way to America. Her closing sentences summarize how many people involved with ethnic awareness must feel: "As I get older, I feel a need to know about my heritage and to experience it for myself. This need becomes stronger as the years go by. My only fear is that it may already be too late."

We hope that it will not be too late. Oral history projects are underway across the nation, and research is being done by people all over the world to help preserve and promote our Carpatho-Rusyn heritage.

FLORIÁN ZAPLETAL (1884-1969)

After 1919, when Carpatho-Rusyn territory south of the Carpathian Mountains became part of Czechoslovakia, several Czechs became intensely interested in Rusyn culture. This is the first of four articles written especially for the Carpatho-Rusyn American *by Dr. Mykola Mušynka of Prešov, Czechoslovakia, which will provide biographies of those Czech scholars and writers who published most about various aspects of Rusyn life.*

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Florián Zapletal, one of the most outstanding Czech activists in interwar Subcarpathian Rus'. His work was many-sided. As a military functionary, politician, art historian, ethnographer, historian, literary scholar, journalist and, last but not least, an art photographer, he left an indelible imprint in each of these spheres. Nevertheless, his name fell into oblivion after World War II, and by 1969, when he was buried in his native village of Bochoř near Přerov in Moravia, he had become completely isolated from cultural and political life. A certain revival of interest has occurred only in the past few years, after Professor Magocsi published the exquisite collection of Zapletal's photographs, *Wooden Churches in the Carpathians* (Vienna, 1982).

Florián Zapletal was the first official of the new Czechoslovak government in Subcarpathian Rus'. When he went there in early 1919, he was already theoretically and practically well prepared. Prior to World War I, he had studied art history at the University of Vienna, and history and philosophy at Charles University in Prague under Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the future president of an independent Czechoslovakia. Immediately after the outbreak of the war in August 1914, he defected to Russia where he became one of the leading activists of the Czechoslovak anti-Austrian resistance as editor of the magazine *Čechoslovák,* which stood for the policy of establishing an independent Czechoslovak republic. At the same time, he continued his study of art history at the universities of Petrograd and Moscow. Among his teachers and a personal friend was the renowned Russian art historian, the Rusyn-born Igor Grabar (see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* Vol. IV, No. 4, 1981).

Soon after his return to an independent Czechoslovakia at the end of 1918, Zapletal was sent to Užhorod to head the Subcarpathian Press Service. When in the summer of 1920 the Rusyn-American lawyer Gregory Zsatkovich became governor of Subcarpathian Rus' (see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* Vol. II, No. 3, 1979), he appointed Zapletal his secretary and chief advisor in military matters. However, both Zsatkovich and Zapletal were soon frustrated with the policies of the Czechoslovak government in Subcarpathian Rus', a fact Zapletal openly expressed in letters to President Masaryk and in a number of articles in the press. After governor Zsatkovich resigned in protest in 1921, Zapletal returned to Prague, although Rusyn culture and politics were to remain in the forefront of his interests.

In 1922, Zapletal published one of his best works in Rusyn art, *Horjanská rotunda* (The Rotunda of Horjany), which dealt with a little-known fourteenth-fifteenth century church located near Užhorod. The following year his survey, "The Wooden Churches of the Subcarpathian Rusyns," appeared. Although relatively short, the study remains invaluable, because of its comprehensive classification of Subcarpathian wooden churches on the basis of their ground plans and because it raised the problem of the imminent danger of the decay of these precious artifacts of Slavic folk architecture whether as a result of official or local neglect. Consequently, Zapletal became involved in a number of campaigns for their preservation, and he devoted virtually all his vacations — even after leaving Subcarpathian Rus' — to photographic documentation and scholarly research on Rusyn wooden churches. Unfortunately, he never succeeded in using his remarkable collection as a basis for a comprehensive scholarly synthesis.

No less important than his concern with Subcarpathian architecture was Zapletal's interest in the development of Czech-Rusyn relations. Besides innumerable articles in Czech periodicals, he also published two small monographs devoted to this theme: *Rusíni a naši buditelé (The Rusyns and Our National Awakeners,* 1921) and *A.I. Dobrjanskij a naši Rusíni r. 1849-1851 (A.I. Dobrjanskij and Our Rusyns in 1849-1851,* 1927). However, the most significant part of Zapletal's writings were his in-depth reports and commentaries on political themes. In the period from 1919 to 1925 alone, Zapletal published in the Czech press as many as 162 articles on Carpatho-Rusyn political life.

Yet dozens of his manuscripts still remain unpublished on deposit in several public and private archives in Czechoslovakia. Perhaps the most outstanding part of Zapletal's heritage is his collection of photographs from Subcarpathia containing several thousand glass negatives, only a small part of which have appeared in print. At least a portion of Zapletal's invaluable unpublished work ought to be made accessible to the public. The centennial of his birth is perhaps as good an opportunity as any to undertake that task.

Mykola Mušynka

FOLK CUSTOMS OF THE CARPATHO-RUSYNS: EASTER

Easter (*Velykden'*) is the central holiday during the time of the spring solstice. Celebrated by Christians as the holiday of Jesus Christ's resurrection, it nevertheless retains a number of elements of originally pre-Christian pagan customs. Thus, for instance, the forty-day period of Lent prior to the Easter festivities has its antecedent in the heathen period of the "great fast." The Carpatho-Rusyns always observed the fast very rigorously. During the whole period, no meat, eggs, or milk products were eaten, and many elderly people also observed the so-called "dry fast" twice a week — on Wednesdays and Fridays. This meant that they neither ate nor drank anything at all. Although "fasting cures" are now strongly recommended by many contemporary physicians, the original "great fast" had nothing to do with any health considerations. In fact, the long period of abstention from certain foods was inevitable in a situation where primitive man was unable to produce sufficient reserves of foodstuffs. Knowing that the hard work connected with spring agricultural activities would require sound nutrition, he provided for the spring by radically reducing his diet at the end of winter. The "great fast" was an appropriate means for doing just that. During this period, the peasants used their special wooden utensils (*djižkȳ, geletkȳ, putyrȳ*) to preserve butter, cheese, *bryndza* (sheep cheese), and sometimes also meat, suet, pork fat, and bacon.

The period of the "great fast" was seen by primitive man as the time of the final conflict between outgoing winter and incoming spring (*vesna*), both conceived as personified creatures: Winter was seen as an ugly old woman or a vicious old man whose intent it was to retain power over the world at the expense of all living things; Spring was seen as a beautiful young maiden who with the help of the supreme god, the Sun, triumphs over the stratagems of Winter.

Winter was the symbol of death, Spring the symbol of life. This magical symbolism is clearly reflected in Carpatho-Rusyn Easter customs. In many Transcarpathian villages it was customary until quite recently to celebrate the so-called Death Sunday two weeks before Easter during which the personified Death (*Morena, Marina, Smertka*) was escorted out of the village. Young girls and boys created a straw effigy of Death and dressed it in old women's clothing. Singing cheerful songs, they carried it to a hill behind the village, being careful not to step either into snow or mud, for they believed that this could be ominous for the forthcoming crop. Behind the village, the effigy was stripped of its rags and was either drowned in a stream or burned. In some places it was customary to visit neighbors with the effigy and collect offerings for an evening party. The women accompanying the procession were in the habit of picking out pieces of straw from the Death effigy which they later placed under brooding hens to ensure that young chicks would be born healthy and sound.

In the beliefs of older generations of Rusyns, the decisive period of struggle between the supernatural forces of good and evil fell within the last week of the fast called Passion Week (*Strastnȳj tyžden'*). On the first Sunday of this week known as Flower or Willow Sunday (*Kvitna* or *Verbova nedilja*), it was usual in the churches to consecrate pussy willows which were believed to contain magic power. At home the pussy willows were kept in a place of honor near the icons all year long in the conviction that this was the best insurance against fires, storms, destructive winds, and other exigencies of nature. They were also used as a protection against "unclean spirits" on such occasions as the birth of a child and during the post-natal period; at baptisms and weddings; when taking cattle to their first pasture, and so on. The consecrated pussy willows were also important in folk medicine.

The key day for exorcizing "unclean spirits" was Green Thursday or *Zelenȳj četver*, for on that day it was believed witches (*bosorkani*) from far and wide held their "annual conclaves" during which they chose their new principals, redistributed their domains, and accepted "novices" into their ranks. There are still many legends in practically all villages inspired by these midnight meetings at places, such as *Lysa hora* (Bare Mountain), *Corna hora* (Black Mountain), or *Čortov verch* (Devil's Hill). These places were, of course, all imaginary, even though there are in the Carpatho-Rusyn homeland mountains that bear the first two names.

Since Easter was a feast of the revival of nature, it was also customary to "revive" the homesteads during the last week before Easter. This included cleaning the house, stables, barns, and cellars; washing kitchen utensils in the stream; polishing tables, benches, beds, and other pieces of furniture; submitting cattle to magic rites; bathing and branding sheep on Friday and Saturday, and many other customs. Thus, for instance, it was usual on Good Friday to wear at least one new piece of clothing, or else, it was believed, one ran the risk of being in tatters for the whole year.

Good Friday required the most rigid fasting. Village boys used to walk around on that day with wooden rattles for exorcizing "unclean spirits." Also, from Thursday to Sunday a large wooden rattle placed in a church tower or belfry was used instead of the bells in what was likewise believed to be an exercise of magic power. The potential wicked deeds of witches were forestalled by special markings on the doors of stables. The doors were marked with the sign of the cross, and at night locked with harrows hung on them with their teeth facing outwards so that the witch would hang herself on them.

On Saturday *paska* was baked. This was a special kind of ritual bread made of wheat flour and decorated with wintergreen and magic symbols, such as the sun, stars, and pictures of animals. Usually one large *paska* was baked (sometimes so large that it had to be axed out of the stove), as well as several smaller ones, most often in a number corresponding to the number of family members. A special kind of cheese — *sȳrok* or *žovta hrudka* — made of milk, flour, and eggs was also prepared. On that day, housewives cooked ham, sausage (*kolbasa*), bacon, eggs, the latter being specially painted for the occasion.

In this connection it is important to note that the egg, especially the chicken's egg, has played an extraordinary role in the Easter customs of Carpatho-Rusyns as well as of other Slavs. Containing an embryo of future life, it was regarded as a symbol of life in general, and as such it was believed to be a depository of unusual magical powers.

Moreover, the egg was considered the first "gift of nature," for hens would begin to lay them long before the spring earth had awakened and had begun to bestow its gifts on man. Since, as was pointed out above, the Carpatho-Rusyns could not eat eggs during the great fast, the number of eggs gathered in that period became so large that it became a custom to present the eggs to relatives and friends. To make it look more like a gift, the egg was painted initially red (*krašankȳ, farbankȳ*), and in the course of time various decorations (*pysankȳ*) were added. The painted egg, as well as being a gift, was like all eggs believed to have magical powers and as such it was widely used in folk magic. It became a means of communication between living and nonliving nature, between this and the other world. Among other customs, eggs used to be plowed into the earth during the first tillage to ensure rich crops; raw egg was rubbed into the skin of cattle to preserve their health; and eggs were laid on the graves of relatives to gain their favor. The various decorations gradually attained the function of symbolic messages expressing the wishes of the egg's owner or donor. Later on, however, the magic function of the ornamental symbols came to be forgotten, and so today even the traditional egg-painters have no explanation for the meaning of certain individual patterns.

Pysankȳ traditions in the Carpatho-Rusyn homeland differ from region to region. Decorations from the Prešov Region and Bojkian Region (central Transcarpathia) are relatively simple though very colorful. Some of the most complex decorative patterns, however, come from the Hucul region in eastern Transcarpathia, and it is no overstatement to say that they are genuine works of art. The most widespread technique in painting eggs is the waxing technique. A decoration is drawn onto the egg with a stylus or pin-top dipped in wax, and subsequently the egg is dropped into a natural or artificial coloring liquid. Nowadays *pysankȳ* from the Carpatho-Rusyn homeland both in the Soviet Union (Transcarpathia) and Czechoslovakia (Prešov Region) have become an important branch of handicraft production, and the two countries export thousands of Carpathian painted eggs to Europe, America, Asia, and Africa — unfortunately, however, without specifying their regional place of origin.

On Saturday night, the master of the household places the *paskȳ,* the painted eggs, and other foodstuffs into big baskets to be brought the following morning to the church for consecration. In most villages, the Easter blessing of *paskȳ* is held in the open air in front of the church. In the more distant past, the *paskȳ* were consecrated in cemeteries in order to emphasize the magical function of the act. Even today this constitutes a grandiose celebration of the awakening of nature. The effect is enhanced by the wide assortment of tantalizing foods, the beauty of exquisitely-painted eggs and embroidered cloths, the fragrance of burning candles, and finally by the stately sound of the choir of believers. While integrated in the course of time into Christianity, this festive ritual has many echoes of the ancient pagan past.

The consecration of paschal food (*svjačenyna*) actually heralded the start of the major festivities which followed the forty days of fasting. Everyone hurried home with the consecrated food in the belief that the summer crop would then also be brought home as swiftly. *Svjačenyna* was the only food eaten on the first day of Easter, and every good husband saw to it that not a single bit fell on the ground, for this would be considered sinful. Even the shells of the Easter eggs were used. They were ground into a powder and mixed with the first-sown grain in order to ensure a higher crop.

With the feast completed, the girls would gather usually at the lower end of the village to take part in Easter games. Hand in hand they went up through the village. Singing various Easter songs and stopping outside the church and cemetery or at a previously chosen meadow behind the village, they paid homage with their songs and spring dances to the reawakening life of nature.

These songs and games were closely connected with agricultural occupations of the villagers. Some of them were immediate imitations of certain agricultural activities, such as the sowing of poppy-seed or millet, the processing of flax or hemp, and many others. Another frequent motif in these games and songs is that of love, finding its reflection mostly in fixed dialogues between boys and girls. In many of the songs and games there is also the motif of a wife ransomed from captivity or serfdom. In one of these games the "husband" offers to buy his wife back for a herd of cows, a flock of sheep, and other gifts. However, the group of girls representing the captors fails to agree with the offer. At last the "husband" frees his "wife" by breaking the cordon of the girls and giving his beloved a kiss. Another motif is connected with

Blessing Easter baskets among immigrant Carpatho-Rusyns living in the village of Lesna, near Tachov in western Bohemia, Czechoslovakia. Photograph by Mykola Mušynka, Easter 1982.

military matters. For instance, in the game *Voritci* (Wickets) girls divide into two "camps" exchanging the following dialogue:

1. *Pustyte nas, pustyte nas,*
   Vijnu vijnuvati!
2. *Ne pustymo, ne pustymo*
   Mosty polamaty.

1a. *Až my mosty polomymo*
Kalynovi naklademo
Taj pinjazi nadajemo
Prjač sobi jdemo.

2b. *A nam sesi ne lomyte,*
Kalynovi ne kladite,
Taj pinjazi ne davajte,
Prjač sobi jdyte!

(1. Let us go to make war. 2. We won't let you go, for you'd break our bridges. 1a. If we break the bridges, we'll build new ones of snowball flowers and give you money and go away. 2a. Don't break the bridges, don't build us new ones out of snowball flowers, and don't give us any money, you'd better go away now!)

Each of the Easter games was accompanied by special group dances by the girls (*chorovodȳ*), thus adding an element of magic to the entertainment. This impression is further enhanced by archaic elements in the song melodies which are similar to those of wedding songs (*ladkankȳ*). The ritual *chorovodȳ* in their original form were on the wane already before World War II, and even the names of their varieties were virtually forgotten. They are now extinct almost everywhere except in some of the most isolated localities. The memories of old-timers and the descriptions of the old dances in folklore literature, however, have become a stimulus for many folklore groups to try and revive this form of ancient folk dance at folklore festivals.

The games and dances were usually ended by the tolling of church bells which summoned the believers to evening services. The girls who ran the quickest to the village were believed to be the most marriageable. In some villages, the Easter *chorovodȳ* ended by welcoming Spring (*Vesna*). Spring was invariably represented by a young girl holding a green twig (usually from a birch tree) and escorted into the village with festive songs. Incidentally, the only participants in the Easter games and dances were girls. Boys either stood by and watched or played their own improvised games.

The second day of Easter was characterized by the custom of Easter dousing. From early Monday morning, groups of young boys visited the houses of village girls and splashed water on them as well as on the other women present in the house, expressing wishes for their good health and well-being. Should some of the girls resist the dousing or even hide, they were brought by the boys to the local stream where they received an even more thorough "watering." In fact, the girls were expected to reward their dousers with a little treat and to present their loved ones with a painted egg. On the next day the roles were reversed: girls doused boys and young women doused their future husbands. Today, the Eastern dousing is practiced even in towns, although as mere entertainment, and instead of water the young dousers (now only the boys perform the ritual) use various perfumes. As a reward, they usually receive painted eggs and candies, and sometimes even small sums of money from their relatives. Though strictly secular today, the custom of Easter dousing still bears the mark of the ancient Rusyn belief in the sanctity of water as a source of all life. Its use in the custom was therefore originally symbolic: it was to purify both the body and soul and to ensure good health and vitality.

The completion of Easter festivities was followed by the beginning of spring agricultural activities which were still symbolically connected with Easter. Thus prior to the first plowing of the season the husbandman smeared the throats of the draft animals with fat from the Easter basket to make sure they remained healthy and strong, and he "planted" an Easter egg in the first furrow to give the soil fertility. The ground shells of Easter eggs and grain from the Christmas table served the same purpose. Sowing them in the direction of the four cardinal points, the husbandman would say: *Toto ptaškom; toto myšam; tot chrobačkom; a toto dyvynji, zebȳ onȳ s tȳm sja uspokojily a ostatnje na pokoju lyšyly.* (This is for the bird; this is for the mice; this is for the worms; and this for animals of the forest; may it satisfy them and may they leave the rest of the crop alone.)

Even though there is a relatively wide-ranging literature describing various manifestations of Carpatho-Rusyn Easter customs, one still feels that there is a lack of a general theoretical approach to these phenomena that would take into account their broader historical, ethnographic, and national contexts. This is a pity, for these customs most certainly deserve such analysis.

Mykola Mušynka
Prešov

UNIQUE VISITS TO THE HOMELAND

The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center has awarded two study stipends in the amount of $500 each to Jerry Jumba, director of the Kruzhok Folk Ensemble of Parma, Ohio and to John Righetti, director of the Carpathian Youth Choir and Dancers of Monessen, Pennsylvania. These stipends are to help defray the cost of travel to Užhorod in Soviet Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus'), where these Rusyn-American cultural activists studied during November and December with choreographers from the Transcarpathian Folk Ensemble and specialists in folk music and instruments from the University of Užhorod. This is the first time since before World War II that Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn background have been able to study in the homeland, and it is a great pleasure to know that these two young cultural activists have been able to gain first-hand experience with traditional Rusyn culture.

This study tour is the result of an agreement reached between the Tovarystvo Ukraina in Kiev and the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center. Our center intends to establish an annual study program to Užhorod that will be open to other choreographers and cultural activists working with Carpatho-Rusyn folk groups in the United States.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

With this issue we continue our survey of recent publications compiled by Philip Michaels. These are from 1980 and will be listed alphabetically. Many of these works are from Eastern Europe and are difficult to obtain. Most, however, can be found in research libraries of major universities (California, Harvard, Indiana, Toronto, Yale) or in institutions like the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Cleveland Public Library. Local libraries can often obtain these works through Interlibrary Loan. Titles which can be purchased will be designated as such. — Editor

Boltarovyč, Zorjana Je. *Narodne likuvannja ukrajinciv Karpat kincja XIX-počatku XX st.* (Popular Cures Among Ukrainians in the Carpathians at the End of the Nineteenth and Beginning of the Twentieth Centuries). Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1980, 120 p.

Folk medicine has always been an important aspect of traditional cultures. This well-written Ukrainian-language volume is the first study to describe in a systematic way all aspects of folk medicine practiced among Carpatho-Rusyns.

The work is divided into four sections: (1) concepts of disease, Rusyn names for disease, and folk "doctors"; (2) the preparation of herbal medicines; (3) the preparation of medicines from animals and mineral water; and (4) the use of magical cures.

Bjelousov, Viktor; Hrančak, Ivan; Dovhanyč, Omeljan et al. *Narysy istoriji Zakarpats'koji oblasnoji partijnoji orhanizaciji* (Historical Survey of the Transcarpathian Communist Party Organization). Užhorod: Karpaty, 1980, 320 p.

Even before the incorporation of the Transcarpathian Oblast (Subcarpathian Rus') into the Soviet Union in 1945, the Communist party played an important role in local politics, most especially when the region was part of the first Czechoslovak republic (1919-1938). This collective work traces systematically the history of the Transcarpathian Communist party from its early beginnings as the International Socialist party (1920) to its activity from the end of World War II to the present when it has been the only political party in the region. Like other Soviet writings on Carpatho-Rusyn political history, only the Communist movement is credited with any positive achievements in the past.

Dialektologický zborník (Dialect Collection), Vol. I. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikanae: Jazykovedný zbornik, 5. Bratislava: Slovenské pedagogické nakladel'stvo, 1980, 250 pp.

This collection of studies devoted to problems of dialects derives from papers that were delivered at the first dialect conference in Slovakia held at the Safarik University of Prešov in April 1975. Eight of these brief studies deal with Carpatho-Rusyn dialects in the Prešov Region of Slovakia and in Soviet Transcarpathia. Of particular interest are studies by V. Oros on Czech lexical influences on the dialect of the Chust region (pp. 95-100); Z. Hanudel' on words for cooking in Prešov Region dialects (pp. 135-140); and J. Dzendzelivs'kyj on Carpatho-Rusyn words in Jakiv Holovac'kyj's mid-nineteenth century unpublished Ukrainian-Russian dictionary (pp. 195-208).

Drobnjak, Mychajlo. *Pidukljans'kyj ukrajins'kyj narodnyj ansambl' UNT—Poddukelský ukrajinský l'udový súbor UND* (The Dukla Ukrainian National Ensemble of the Ukrainian National Theater). Bratislava and Prešov: Slovac'ke pedahohične vydavnyctvo, viddil ukrajins'koji literatury, 1980, 200 pp.

There are two professional Carpatho-Rusyn folk ensembles in Europe (Dukla in Prešov and the Transcarpathian Ensemble in Užhorod), as well as numerous semi-professional and amateur groups that have come into being since World War II in both Czechoslovakia and Soviet Transcarpathia. None, however, is as famous as the Dukla Ensemble, which has toured on several occasions Western European countries and in 1972, under the management of Sol Hurok Concerts, the United States and Canada.

This large-format volume is a beautiful photographic history of the ensemble since its establishment in 1955. Almost every page includes at least one black-and-white or color photograph of the ensemble in performance or of the countryside in the Prešov Region which inspires its repertoire. The texts in both Ukrainian and Slovak provide a short description of the ensemble's development. A list of all its premieres between 1957 and 1980 and a brief résumé in English are appended.

Duklja, Vol. XXVII, No. 1-6 (Prešov, 1980), 80 pp. each issue.

Most of the material in this volume contains new literary works by Prešov Region authors or reviews of recent Ukrainian-language publications from that area. The only substantive scholarly articles are by Josyf Dzendzelivs'kyj (No. 4) on three recently-discovered manuscripts by the eighteenth century Carpatho-Rusyn grammarian and poet, Arsenij Kocak (1733-1800); and by Olena Rudlovčak (No. 6) on Rusyn journalism from the early 19th century through the communist press of the interwar period.

Also of interest are several biographical and commemorative articles on local cultural leaders, including the writers Fedor Lazoryk (No. 1), Petro Gula (No. 2), and Mychajlo Saldoboš (No. 6); the literary historians Mychajlo Roman (No. 5) and Mychajlo Mol'nar (No. 5); the political scientist Ivan Bajcura (No. 6); the cultural activist Dr. Dionisij F. Rojkovyč (No. 6); and the entire company of the Ukrainian National Theater in Prešov (No. 6), as well as a special article on the Simko family dramatic performers (No. 5).

Etnografický výskum zatopovej oblasti hornej Cirochy v okrese Humenné (Ethographic Research in the Flooded Region of the Upper Cirocha River in the Humenné Okres), Košice: Východoslovenské vydavatel'stvo, 1980, 127 p.

In 1977, a scholarly conference was held in Bratislava to review the work by researchers that was undertaken in several Rusyn villages (Starina, Vel'ka Pol'ana, Smolník, Dara, Ostrožnica, Zvala, and Ruské) located northeast of the city of Humenné in Czechoslovakia before they were flooded in the late 1970s to make way for a reservoir. This volume contains nineteen papers in Slovak delivered at the conference and dealing with the material, spiritual, and linguistic aspects of traditional Carpatho-Rusyn culture in the destroyed villages. Related works by many of the same authors and others on this subject were published in Ukrainian in 1979 (see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* Vol. VI, no. 4, p. 4).

IMAGES OF VERCHOVYNA

Not long ago, the Carpatho-Rusyn American *received an article and graphic sketches from Stanislav Lazebnyk, Deputy Chairman of the Tovarystvo Ukraina (Society for Cultural Relations with Ukrainians Abroad) in Kiev, the capital of the Ukrainian SSR. We share with you excerpts from an article about Mykola Shelest, an artist living in Kiev with a special interest in Carpatho-Rusyn art and culture. — Editor*

Seventeen years ago, the well-known Ukrainian graphic artist Mykola Shelest went on a trip through the towns and villages of the Verchovyna — the highland region of Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus') — that land of sky-blue lakes and emerald forests, exciting legends, and folk narrations. The artist was instantly enraptured by Verchovyna's fairy tale charms. He filled his album with sketches and his notebook with the lyrics of folk songs and stories.

On one occasion, he met an old man in one of the villages. An eager listener and an even more eager talker, the old man had a good memory and natural eloquence. He told the artist about his life, and the story was so exciting that it sounded like an epic professionally written and ready for printing.

Listening to the old man, Mykola Shelest the artist saw strikingly vivid scenes from the highlander's trying past: his trip to America in search of a better life, his return home as an orphan, and his disillusionment. The old man's story was typical of the entire history of his people, who inherently had always been hard workers. In those grim years, they were blind to the beauty of the pine-covered mountains around them. What struck the artist most, however, was the way Carpatho-Rusyns had been scattered in the world. They lived in the Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the United States, Canada, France, and other countries. but regardless of where these people were cast by the biggest waves of the ocean of life, they retained their national identity and held sacred their old traditions.

All Mykola Shelest, a Ukrainian born in the Dnipropetrovsk region, knew about the history of his brothers living in the Carpathians was from books and films. Now the old Verchovynian's story had awakened his emotions and stirred his creative interest. The artist stayed in the Carpathians for three years and walked almost all of the territory inhabited by the Carpatho-Rusyns. The result was a series of graphic works.

These prints are based on sketches drawn from life, which means that the portraits show real people and are not products of an artistic imagination. At the same time, the series is based on folk songs which are known to reveal all facets of the life of the people. The graphic works also offer an insight into the ethnography of the Transcarpathian highland and its handicrafts. The prints are not static, nor are they overladen with scenes from everyday life. The artist skillfully builds every composition to convey the development of subject, the psychological stress of the action, the character of the heroes, and the meaning of what is happening.

Clarity and sureness of line is intrinsic to every work of Mykola Shelest. As a rule, his heroes are clad in their best clothes usually comprised of several pieces. He aptly stresses the cut and ornamental details, generally conveying the dynamics of the composition and never forgetting to emphasize human forms.

From his travels in the Carpathians, Shelest also brought back three albums full of folk songs (he is still to compile them). He used some of them as graphic themes. Yes, themes, because each song is a short story in the best sense of the word, written by the greatest geniuses — the people.

Mykola Shelest ranks among the leading Ukrainian graphic artists. His works have been exhibited in the United States, Canada, Greece, Iran, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. All told, graphic pieces by Shelest have been included in international art exhibits in sixty countries.

Mykola Chubuk

OUR FRONT COVER

"The Bridal Shower," graphic print by Mykola Shelest.

"Such is Her Lot," by Mykola Shelest.

"Carry Me, My Horse," by Mykola Shelest.

"A Lemko Dance," by Mykola Shelest.

FROM OUR CENTER

The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center completed in 1983 its sixth year of operation. That year was also its most successful from the standpoint of finances and number of publications distributed. In 1983, our center filled the largest number of orders for any one year — 918 — which accounted for 1,478 items sold. This means that during six years of operation, we have filled a total of 3,643 orders accounting for 8,247 items sold.

These statistics confirm that our non-profit organization has carried out its initial goal: "to distribute a comprehensive selection of books and articles about Carpatho-Rusyns in the homeland and in the United States." Although most of our publications are obtained by Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn background, we also supply materials to numerous public and university libraries throughout the United States, Canada, and in major centers of western and eastern Europe. Our own publications as well as those we distribute from other publishers have been reviewed favorably in numerous journals and newspapers in North America and Europe. Indeed, our activity has helped to make Carpatho-Rusyn culture known not only to our own people but to interested readers in many parts of the world.

It should be kept in mind that we receive no financial support from any church, fraternal, or government agency. With the exception of the person who fulfills orders, none of our officers, editors, or writers receives any compensation for his or her work. Those profits that we do make from the sale of books are used to help publish, through guaranteed prepurchasing arrangements, new books about Carpatho-Rusyns. We have also been able to begin a translation project that will result in the appearance in English of classic works in Carpatho-Rusyn scholarship, the first being a study of Easter eggs (*pysankŷ*), the second a general description of Rusyn history, culture, and religion. Our center has also for the first time this year been able to award fellowships to two Rusyn-American choreographers studying in the homeland and to provide financial support for the quarterly newsletter, *Carpatho-Rusyn American.*

Although our center publishes the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* that newsletter has an independent budget. Unfortunately, the number of subscribers, which has ranged from 650 to 750 during its six years of existence, is insufficient to make the quarterly self-sustaining. Therefore, any contributions to the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center — which are tax-deductible — are used to help support the *Carpatho-Rusyn American.* We have many original articles to publish in the newsletter that deal with Rusyn traditional customs in the homeland and with the life of Rusyns in America. We hope you will favor us with a contribution to keep up one important aspect of our work, the quarterly newsletter *Carpatho-Rusyn American.*

SEARCH FOR ROOTS

Some time ago I attended a seminar entitled "Researching Our Immigrant Families" at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, the emphasis was on non-Slavic nationalities, and therefore the seminar was of little practical use to me. Something I saw there, however, changed my way of thinking about researching my family history. I saw a young woman who had done so much research that she needed a briefcase to hold all of the information that she had unearthed. As I enviously eyed the thick binders full of family history, I thought to myself, the era of "Roots" has passed me by. I had done little to explore my family's past and now I knew as little about my ancestors in 1983 as I did in 1976 when the publishing of Alex Haley's *Roots* encouraged ethnic Americans to seek out their past.

Until that time, I had felt that it was futile to search for a past that existed only as vague memories in my relatives' minds. Most of the records in the old country were probably destroyed in World War II along with the churches that held them. And of course, what was a genealogy without documents and cold, hard facts?

My father, on a trip to Habura (a village near Medzilaborce in the Prešov Region of present-day northeastern Czechoslovakia), had brought back bits and pieces of information. My 95 year-old great-uncle, Hryhory, had come to America over 70 years ago to work for a short time before returning to his native village. The original wooden church in Habura had been sent to a museum in a large city; the church built to replace it, together with the *korčma* (tavern), were the only structures to survive World War II. Most of the inhabitants had been sent to live with families in Poland for the duration of the war. You see, Habura was along the front between the Soviets and the Nazis. Our relatives who remained in the village hid in trenches while bullets whistled overhead. Maybe I would never have a family tree that went back any farther than my great-grandparents, but I had the makings of a terrific story.

The point of all this is that I am inviting you to join me on a journey. Think of me as the tour guide, while you, as active participants, will determine where this trip will take you. Due to historical circumstances, the search for Rusyn roots is a difficult one. But I have become aware of special strategies that will make the task easier. In my own personal search I hope to explore these methods further and relate my findings to you so that you may in turn use them to aid your own search.

Experienced travelers are welcome. Please feel free to share your own experiences with us. To first-timers, join me!

First stop — the National Archives!

Patricia A. Onufrak

READER'S REQUEST

Anyone having knowledge of the histories of the following parishes founded or co-founded by Rusyns in eastern Pennsylvania — St. John's, Pottstown (1903); Holy Ascension, Frackville (1915); St. John's Maizeville (1908); St. Mary's, Brockton (1912); St. Michael's, Shenandoah (1884); St. Mary's, Hazelton (1889); St. John's, Hazelton (1893); Assumption, St. Clair (1911); All Saints, Olyphant (1905); St. John's, Scranton (1895) — please contact John T. Schweich, 6043 James Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419.

RUSYN FORUM

Kiev, USSR. The International Congress of Slavists held its ninth meeting in Kiev between September 6 and 14, 1983. This scholarly gathering takes place every five years and this year more than 2,000 scholars from 30 countries participated. As with the first congress (held in Prague in 1929) so too at this one were there papers delivered about Carpatho-Rusyn subjects. These included L. Dezső (Hungary) on classification systems for the study of historical grammar based on Rusyn texts from the seventeenth century; J. Dorul'a (Czechoslovakia) on Slovak-Rusyn linguistic contact in the Carpathians; J. Rieger (Poland) on the lexical characteristics of Carpatho-Rusyn dialects; O. Myšanyč (USSR) on the newest Slavic literature, that of the Rusyns of Yugoslavia; and M. Mol'nar (Czechoslovakia) on recent literary scholarship about Rusyn-Ukrainian writers in the Prešov Region. Of particular interest at the conference, where all Slavic languages are used for presentations, was the lecture of E. Barić from Yugoslavia. Although a Croatian, she delivered her paper on the Rusyn language of Yugoslavia in Rusyn. She even mentioned the usefulness for her work of the dialectal text, *Let's Speak Rusyn — Bisidujme po-rus'kỹ,* published by the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center.

Atlanta, Ga. On October 7, 1983, Professor Walter Ullman of the University of Syracuse delivered a paper entitled, "The First Shock: The Cession of Subcarpathian Rus'," at the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies. The speaker discussed the impact on postwar Czechoslovak foreign policy of the loss of its far eastern province, Subcarpathian Rus' (*Podkarpatská Rus*), ceded to the Soviet Union in June 1945.

Vienna, Austria. From October 18 to November 2, an exhibit on Carpatho-Rusyn religious and secular culture was held in the central branch of the Creditanstalt, one of Vienna's largest banks. The exhibit featured large scale photographs taken from *Wooden Churches in the Carpathians,* compiled by Dr. Paul R. Magocsi, as well as a display of original folk costumes, handpainted Easter eggs, embroideries, and wooden sculpture from Rusyn villages in both the Prešov Region of Czechoslovakia and Transcarpathia in the Soviet Union. The exhibit was made possible by loans from the Heritage Institute of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Diocese of Passaic and from museums in Vienna. The Creditanstalt bank also published a brochure on Rusyn wooden architecture to accompany the exhibit, and on the first evening more than 100 persons came to hear Professor Johannes Spalt speak on architecture in Rusyn lands with reference to *Wooden Churches in the Carpathians,* available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center for $24.50.

New York, N.Y. The widely-distributed monthly magazine *Life* carried in its December 1983 issue an article with several stunning photographs of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, New York. Although described as a Russian religious institution within the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia — the Synod, the monastery has interesting ties to Carpatho-Rusyns. Founded in the 1930s, the largest number of monks came after World War II from the Orthodox Monastery located until then in the Carpatho-Rusyn village of Ladomirová, a few kilometers north of Svidník in the Prešov Region of Czechoslovakia (see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American,* Vol. III, No. 1, p. 5). In fact, the cathedral at the Jordanville monastery is a replica of the church that still stands in Ladomirová; while the head of the monastery (and bishop of Syracuse and Jordanville), whose picture appears in the *Life* article, is Laurus Škurla, a Carpatho-Rusyn born in Ladomirová. This is the second time during 1983 that some aspect of Carpatho-Rusyn culture was featured in a major American publication — the stylish food magazine *Gourmet* in its April issue carried a major article on Rusyn food entitled, "A Ruthenian Heritage."

Chicago, Ill. On December 4, 1983, the Ukrainian National Museum presented an exhibit of watercolors by Tatiana T. Bayuk, entitled: "Ukrainian Wooden Churches of the Prešov Region (N. E. Slovakia) — Their Styles and Architectural Variety." Sponsored by the Illinois Art Council, the exhibit included short lectures on the Carpatho-Rusyn churches given by the artist.

New York, N.Y. In January 1984, Edward Kasinec, longtime supporter of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, was appointed Chief of the Slavonic Division of the New York Public Library. As a division devoted exclusively to collecting Slavic materials, it is one of the oldest in the United States and contains one of the richest collections of Slavic books in the world. It is also the only Slavic collection to have its complete holdings published in a catalog form (780,000 entries in 44 volumes). Before taking up this prestigious position, Mr. Kasinec held library posts at Harvard University and the University of California at Berkeley.

The new incumbent is only the fifth chief to head the Slavonic Division since its establishment in 1902. Moreover, he is the first person of Slavic background to hold the post. Born in New York City, both Mr. Kasinec's parents are Carpatho-Rusyns from Subcarpathian Rus' (present-day Soviet Transcarpathia).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pittsburgh, Pa. Carpatho-Rusyns will be well represented this spring at festivities in and around the greater Pittsburgh area. On Sunday afternoon, March 18, the Rusyny Folk Ensemble will perform at the West Mifflin Knights of Columbus Hall. On May 19, the group will also participate in the fourth annual Heritage Day parade, sponsored by the City of Pittsburgh. This event brought thousands of spectators and participants to the city last spring to demonstrate pride in their ethnic heritages.

The following weekend, May 25-27, the annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival will take place. Carpatho-Rusyns will be represented by Slavjane, the fine ensemble from Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in McKees Rocks, which is co-sponsored by the Greek Catholic Union. The Pittsburgh Folk festival has become a major event in the Pittsburgh area and seems to improve each year. We invite our readers who live nearby to be at the David Lawrence Convention Center where the festival will be held.

Binghampton, N.Y. On May 19, an East Slavic Heritage Day will be held at the Roberson Center for the Arts and Sciences. The program will include folk ensembles performing, among others, Carpatho-Rusyn songs and dances. The guest speaker will be Dr. Paul R. Magocsi of the University of Toronto, who will lecture on the problem of identity among Eastern Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians, Carpatho-Rusyns) in the United States. For further information, contact Zenon Wasyliw: 607-798-3930.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILWAUKEE
WISCONSIN
Permit No. 1744

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Published four times a year by the
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Fairview, New Jersey

Editor: **Patricia A. Krafcik**
Associate Editor: **Andrew G. Kovaly**
Assistant Editor: **Patricia A. Onufrak**
Business Manager: **Steve Mallick**

Communications concerning content should be sent to:

Patricia A. Krafcik, Editor
Department of Slavic Languages
University of Pittsburgh
Loeffler Building 120
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Annual subscription: $7.00
To subscribe, send check or money order to:

Carpatho-Rusyn American
5485 Forest Glen Road
North Madison, Ohio 44057

CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Vol. VII, No. 2 Summer, 1984

FROM THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

"Why in the world would anyone want to run a dance group?" People (even family and friends) still ask that today, six years after the birth of Rusyny, Carpatho-Rusyn Folk Ensemble based in Mc Keesport, Pennsylvania. To attempt an answer, we offer a brief personal account of the development of one Rusyn-American folk dancer.

Most folk dancers in America are not born with an ethnic awareness, rather they evolve under the influence of many factors. My own evolution began in 1961, when I and some friends joined the Saint Nicholas Folk Dancers. We were asked to participate and represent our parish in the first Mc Keesport International Village. Being a teen-ager, I was concerned more about the social aspects of the ensemble than with any thoughts of preserving my heritage. As a member of the group, I was having fun and learning at the same time. The challenges of performing before an audience, doing the proper steps in the dances, and remembering the words to songs that I did not even understand — all of these activities were helping to develop my confidence and lead me to adulthood. Being just a member, without the responsibilities of leadership, was relatively easy.

Three or four years later, our "teacher" (Marylin Fulem) retired in order to continue studies at college, to marry, and to raise a family. We, nonetheless, continued the group, and all the members managed to share the responsibilities of running it. We were like a family of twenty teens, sharing the joys and sorrows of growing up.

That original group continued for another three or four years, but eventually we all went on to school, to jobs, and to families. In the spring of 1978, some of us from the "old" group watched our own children perform in a school show at the Saint Nicholas parish, directed at the time by Jerry Jumba. Watching our children performing Carpatho-Rusyn dances and once again hearing familiar music touched us deeply and inspired the formation of a new group. Within three months — and with help from our parish, our pastor, and the United Societies fraternal organization — Rusyny was born.

Being on the managing end of a group like Rusyny did present some problems. First, we wanted to be a family-oriented group, so we needed to develop material for young children, teens, young adults, and even parents. To accomplish this, we challenged Jerry Jumba, and he responded with a well-organized training program which continues to this day.

Yet, even with material, musicians, and other human resources, there is still the ever-present problem of scheduling. Trying to arrange practices and shows for sixty people of all ages is often extremely difficult. There are so many other functions to compete with: school activities, scouts, work schedules, and vacations. Performing at International Village at eight in the evening, then going to work in the mill at midnight has happened more than once in the last six years. Recent conversations with John Righetti and Jerry Jumba, who studied in Užhorod last year, show that the situation there is entirely different. With government-sponsored folk groups, time provided for practice, travel time provided for shows and tours, and even rubles for costumes, it is easier to be a member of an ensemble there.

Rusyny has nonetheless managed to survive. This August will be our seventh International Village performance. We have already been involved in over forty shows. Is it worth the trouble? Yes and no!

Running a group like ours is a lot of work. For us, it is all volunteer work — no pay, long hours practicing, teaching, arranging show orders, even printing programs. Ed Jones (my brother-in-law and co-director), Helenka Robertson (our finance person), myself, and our spouses have occasionally even questioned our own sanity.

But then we do a show and something magical happens. We see our young people authentically recreating the spirit of our people in dance. We hear eight-year-olds sing in Rusyn as if it were their native tongue. We witness the qualities of leadership, showmanship, and the development of self-confidence in our young. We see tears of joy in our baba's faces, as they see and hear the things from their youth that they had left behind so long ago. We hear the audience respond with cheers and applause and know that we have captured them with our performance. These are the things that make it all worthwhile!

Fortunately, we are not alone in our efforts to promote the Carpatho-Rusyn heritage. There are other groups sponsored by both Orthodox and Catholic churches and by fraternal societies, which perform at various festivals and concerts. For example, in Pennsylvania, there is Slavjane, sponsored by Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in McKees Rocks and by the Greek Catholic Union; the Carpathian Youth Choir and Dancers of Saint John the Divine Orthodox Church (OCA) in Monessen; SS. Peter and Paul's Rusin Group in Windber (Johnstown Diocese); the Holy Ghost Byzantine Choir and Dancers in Philadelphia; and Karpaty at St. John's Orthodox Church in Ambridge (Johnstown Diocese), which is in the process of re-organizing. In Ohio, there are groups like Kruzhok, affiliated with the Byzantine Diocese of Parma and co-sponsored by the Greek Catholic Union; the Carpathians in Barberton; and Krajane in Dayton. Farther west in Michigan, there is the Beskydy in Livonia and St. Basil's Krajane in Sterling Heights, while back east, in Wayne, New Jersey is the choral group Verchovina. These are only groups that we have heard of or seen, but there are many other parish clubs, craft organizations, and study groups as well that are continuing to provide outlets of education and understanding for our people.

Is it worth it? If Rusyny can do even a little to develop understanding and awareness among our own people, and if we can contribute even in small measure to develop leaders among our youth, then it is worth all the effort we can afford to give.

OUR FRONT COVER

Rusalja customs from the Carpatho-Rusyn village of Kurov in the Prešov Region, as presented at the International Folk Festival in Strážnice, Czechoslovakia, 1979. Photo by Ivan Nováček.

IVAN OLBRACHT (1882-1952)

During the 1920s and 1930s, Subcarpathian Rus' attracted the attention of many outstanding writers. The most important of them was Ivan Olbracht, a Czech writer whose depiction of the Rusyn land and its people was the most sensitive. Olbracht was the son of a Czech writer and lawyer, and of a wealthy Jewish landowner's Christian convert daughter. The young Olbracht's university studies toward a law degree were interrupted by his involvement in the Social Democratic party. He was often persecuted and imprisoned by the Austrian authorities for his political activities, in part because he was an editor of the Czech Social Democratic periodicals *Dělnické listy*, published in Vienna, and *Právo lidů*, published in Prague.

In 1920, Olbracht illegally visited Soviet Russia, which then had no diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia, and after a six-month stay he returned home a convinced Communist. He became a co-founder of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia in 1921; however, he was expelled from the party in 1929. From then until the end of World War II, he devoted himself exclusively to literary activity. In search of new themes, he set out in 1931 to visit the Prešov Region of Eastern Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus' where he spent several months. He returned there again in the following years. Most of the time he spent in the village of Koločava, the birthplace of Nikola Šuhaj, the legendary latter-day "Robin Hood" of the Rusyns.

As early as 1931, Olbracht began to publish a series of reportages entitled "The Cultural Struggle in Subcarpathian Rus'," reprinted in 1932 in book form under the title *Země bez jména* (Land Without a Name). This work is a precise analysis of the economic, political, ethnic, and cultural situation in the area based on a comparison of the historical development with the present.

In 1933, Olbracht published his most famous novel *Nikola Šuhaj loupežník* (Nikola Šuhaj, The Brigand). This is a balladic story of a man deeply rooted in the Subcarpathian land, a man searching for freedom and justice, a man of passionate loves and hates. The novel enjoyed enormous popularity and went quickly into several printings. Liberal literary critics welcomed it enthusiastically. Conservative circles, however, demanded that it be banned, and eventually they succeeded in having it removed from school libraries in Subcarpathian Rus'.

Despite the continuing polemics about the merits of this novel, Olbracht, together with his writer-friends Karel Nový and Vladislav Vančura, wrote a screenplay for a full-length film "Marijka nevěrnice" (Marijka, the Unfaithful), which was produced in the summer of 1933 in the village of Koločava. The film was remarkable for its exclusive use of local villagers as actors — Subcarpathian shepherds, lumberjacks, raftsmen, and village youths. Olbracht himself played the role of a Czech tourist. Present-day criticism regards the film as one of the most successful on a social theme ever made in Europe.

Olbracht's experiences from his journey to Subcarpathian Rus' in 1934 are reflected in six extensive reportages published in book form in 1935 under the title *Hory a staletí* (Mountains and Centuries). They are largely dramatic stories based on real-life events.

Ivan Olbracht with the daughter of Nikola Šuhaj — Anna — photographed in Koločava, 1935.

The only openly political work of Olbracht during the 1930s was an article, "Who is Responsible for the Events in the Eastern Part of Our Republic?," dealing with a strike by lumberjacks in Jasinja in Subcarpathian Rus', as well as with the peasant rebellions in Čertižné and Habura in the Prešov Region of Eastern Slovakia. Olbracht's last book on a Subcarpathian theme was a collection of three short stories from the Orthodox Jewish milieu, entitled *Golet v údolí* (Golet in the Valley) and published in 1938.

After World War II, during which he lived in a sort of self-imposed voluntary exile in a small village in Southern Bohemia, Olbracht rejoined the Communist party of Czechoslovakia and returned to political life. However, his age and health did not permit him to return to literary activities. He took part in the film adaptation of *Nikola Šuhaj, The Brigand*, but it is generally agreed that the film hardly compares with the original novel.

The fiction of Ivan Olbracht based on Subcarpathian themes is unanimously regarded as the peak of his literary career. His fiction has also met with a remarkable response abroad. As of 1981, *Nikola Šuhaj, The Brigand* has been translated into nineteen languages and *Golet in the Valley* into ten languages. We are not aware of any English translation of Olbracht's works, with the exception of the now rare edition of *Nikola Šuhaj* published in Prague in 1954. We have no doubt, however, that a new translation of Šuhaj as well as Olbracht's other remarkable literary creations would meet with a hearty response, especially among Rusyn Americans.

Mykola Mušynka

DISCOVERING THE SOURCE OF FOLK DANCE ART IN TRANSCARPATHIA

The author of this article, Klara Kerečanyn-Balog, is well known by every folk art ensemble in Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus'). Her work is most closely connected, however, with the famed Zakarpats'kyj Narodnyj Ansembl' (the Transcarpathian Folk Ensemble) in Užhorod, for which she is balletmaster. Ms. Balog began dancing in 1945, and since 1951 she has been given several honors, including the title, National People's Artist (1974), the highest award for an artist in a Soviet republic. This article was written specially for the Carpatho-Rusyn American *and was translated from Ukrainian by Margarita S. Mikhalyova and Jerry Jumba.*

Folklore plays a major role in the development of the inner cultural characteristics of a people. Folk dances are an integral part of all branches of folklore in Transcarpathia, and therefore choreography has an important social function. Although for centuries the people of Subcarpathian Rus' tended to be isolated from their Eastern Slavic brothers, they still preserved their native language and customs and developed their own rich choreography and folk art. Today, Soviet Transcarpathia is divided into thirteen districts. Each district is clearly different from another, not only in music but also in clothing. It is the duty of those who keep this culture to develop and enrich it. The village feeds us not only with bread, it also gives us the treasure of a spirited and moral expression. In those areas of Transcarpathia whose population is Rusyn — the Hutsul, Boikian, Lemkian, and Verchovyna regions — we find a Rusyn character in the music, dancing, and customs. On the other hand, the districts bordering Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania are influenced by those neighboring cultures. Moreover, in the southern parts of the Berehovo, Vynohradiv, and Užhorod districts within Transcarpathia, some of the inhabitants are Hungarian, while in certain villages of the Tjačiv district there are Romanians.

The ethnographer who seeks certain almost forgotten Transcarpathian dances provides a great service to the development of our folk arts. In order to find unique dances, songs, costumes, ornaments, instruments, and customs, it is necessary to know the people and to visit individual villages several times. The choreographer-artist must understand a body of characteristics before preparing material for performance. Specific musical accompaniment, singing, costumes, time, place, and the nature of the occasion, all provide unique human characteristics that bring the substance and structure of life to an artistic creation.

Take, for example, the Iršava district, which is a treasure of original folklore in Transcarpathia. The village of Velykyj Rakovec' has given us dances which are now well known among many European folk groups, such as the Rakovec'kyj Kručenyj (crossing), Rakivčanka, Starovinnyj Tanec (old fashioned dance). When I visited Velykyj Rakovec', the watchman at the local grocery store recalled how they did the Old Fashioned Dance when he was young. A boy held a girl's right hand, and standing face to face they stamped and hopped. They held each other's right hand during the whole dance. I wondered why they also called this dance the "Ardjal's'kyj." Other dance specialists later discovered that in the nineteenth century, when Transcarpathia was under Austro-

Klara Kerečanyn-Balog

Hungarian rule, the people of Velykyj Rakovec' went to *Erdely* (the Hungarian name for Transylvania) in order to work on a seasonal basis. There, they imitated some Romanian steps, and when they returned home to Velykyj Rakovec', they added this new element to their dances, varying it according to their own style of movement.

Four years after meeting the watchman, I met two old women in the Chust district who had left Velykyj Rakovec' when they were young. They helped me reconstruct the Ardjal's'kyj dance. The young men and women arrive at an open flat area near a home. It starts without music, because the boys invite the girls to dance with these verses:

1. *Ta mȳ sobi zatancujme, divočki, divočki,*
   Tak až bȳ sja zemlja trjasla, myli frajiročki.
2. *Totu im sobi poljubyv ja, ščo fajno tancuje,*
   ščo ručkamy obnimaje i v rotyk ciluje.
3. *Oj, idu ja tancjuvaty, beru divku z kraju,*
   abȳ ljudy ne kazaly, ož ja vȳbyraju.
4. *Zahudaj mi hudačenku taj u jednu strunu,*
   ta naj sobi z bilavkoju malo potancuju.

(1. Girls, girls, let's dance together
Until, dear friends, the earth will shake.
2. I fell in love with the girl who dances so well,
Who hugs me and places a kiss on my lips.
3. Oh, I am going to dance and take the last girl in the line
So people won't say I especially chose her.
4. Then play for me fiddler on one string
And I will dance a while with the flaxen-haired girl.)

The girls stand in one row, the boys in a row opposite them. After the first bang of the drum, the boys stretch their right hand forward. The second bang signals the girls to put their right hands into the outstretched hands of the boys. The third bang signals the orchestra to play. Holding the right hand is the rule of the dance, and only when the drum bangs the last time will the hands separate.

While collecting folk choreography materials, the specialist has to be well informed of the geographic location of the dances and the folk costumes of the performers. Through-

out Transcarpathia the native clothing is deeply connected with nature, the character of the environment, and the artistic sensibility of the people. In the mountain environment, the girls have narrow skirts; consequently, in dances, the steps tend to be short and the arms are held close to the body. Generally speaking, there is less dance space available so that there is more accentuation of the vertical character of the dance. The leather shoes (*postoly*, bočkory) are light and closely bound to the feet, encouraging light, quick steps and dancing on toes. On the other hand, in the warmer lowland valleys, the general character of the dance is affected by the availability of more space. The girls have wider skirts and arm movement tends to be broader. Sometimes the light *postoly* are replaced by boots (*čoboty*, or *čižmy*) which encourages more stamping.

Folk dance enthusiasts can find the real beauty of dances when they can participate in the ideas drawn from the natural creativity of the people. This creativity springs out of the depths of the earth to be enjoyed and shared with the people. This is our noble aim.

Klara Kerečanyn-Balog

FOLK CUSTOMS OF CARPATHO-RUSYNS
THE PASTORAL FESTIVALS: PENTECOST/RUSALJA

Pentecost has also been called *Zeleni svjata* (festival of greens), *Trijcja* (Trinity), and *Rusalja*. It is the most important festival after Christmas and Easter, beginning on the fiftieth day after Easter. Like all other holidays in Transcarpathia, Pentecost is also closely connected with agricultural activities, especially with cattle-breeding. Perhaps in keeping with the time of the year, it also has strong erotic overtones. The celebrations started on the eve of Pentecost when each cowherd wreathed the horns of his cattle with green twigs and returned his decorated herd to the village. Green twigs (mostly lime or hazel) were also used for the decoration of houses, both inside and outside. Green was likewise predominant in churches, where the floor was covered with grass, and in other public places.

A typical custom was the raising of maypoles by young men on the eve of Pentecost. First they would sink a common maypole in the middle of the village. Usually it was a tall fir tree stripped of branches and bark, leaving only a few branches at the top left to be decorated with flowers, wreaths, and paper ribbons. Having done this, the boys would "fortify" themselves with a slug or two of homemade brandy and split up into smaller groups to set up individual maypoles for the village girls. If a boy wanted the maypole to be a symbol of love for a particular girl, he would set up the maypole by himself, usually on a rooftop, where he guarded it against the attempts of his rivals to pull it down. Very often the guardians of the maypoles and their rivals even got involved in skirmishes. The custom of raising maypoles for girls is retained in many villages still today, though in some places it has been transferred to May Day.

Midsummer night (June 24) was one of the few occasions during which the village community tolerated excesses which it would otherwise proscribe. The boys especially took advantage of certain extraordinary liberties: they would exchange the entry gates of different houses, cover with straw the paths between the houses of couples in love, carry a chicken coop or even an outhouse from one backyard into another, and so on. Perhaps the crowning event of the midsummer night fooleries might be the lifting of a hay wagon onto the crest of a roof (it would be brought there in parts and reassembled on the roof).

Until the end of the nineteenth century, many Rusyn villages in the Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia retained the custom of "walking with the scarecrow (*džadko*)." The shepherds would produce a wood or straw effigy of a male figure with a conspicuous phallic part, and they would walk from house to house asking for cloth to dress the scarecrow and for food (grain, bread, bacon, and eggs) to feed "him." The cloth and grain would then be exchanged in the tavern for brandy, and the remaining foodstuffs taken to the woods where the young shepherds would have a feast lasting three days and two nights. The feast, also known as *pastyrske Rusalja* or "herders' Rusalja," has much in common with the "diabolic games beyond the villages in which the young folk sin," described by the Old Rus' historiographer Nestor in his eleventh-century *Primary Chronicle* covering the history of early Kievan Rus'. These were the only three days in the year when the herders (both boys and girls) would not bring the cattle back to the village, but would spend the night together with them in the forest where they would pass the time in various skits and games, often with an erotic undertone. The most popular of the skits was the "herders' wedding" — an imitation of a real wedding, including all the folk customs usually accompanying it. The liberties of the midsummer night festivities included even a certain tolerance of sexual freedom, otherwise strongly condemned.

However, Rusalja was not free from more serious concerns and activities. The wish for a good crop was expressed in the form of prayers and processions. It was usual for priests in the course of the processions to consecrate wells in the fields with holy water; also, husbandmen would stick green branches into their fields to protect them from natural disasters.

A special phenomenon connected with the celebrations of Rusalja was the so-called "girls' fair" held at the Rusyn monastery in Krásny Brod near Medzilaborce (Prešov Region) from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The famous Czech nineteenth-century writer Božena Němcová described it in her travelogue *Pictures of Life in Slovakia* in this way: "The Rusyn men had in the previous century the custom of choosing their brides at fairs especially held for that purpose. One of the best-known "girls' fairs" (in Hungarian *Leány-vasar*) was held at the St. Basil monastery in Krásny Brod. There would gather the prospective brides — single girls and widows — with their relatives on the one hand, and the prospective bridegrooms with their relatives on the other hand. The young brides had their heads covered with small wreaths of periwinkle and ribbons, and the widows with kerchiefs. Visitors to this fair numbered in the thousands. Some of the young lads knew beforehand which girl they would choose for their bride and many of the girls knew who their intended would be, but there were also many young people who met there for the first time. The customary procedure was that the bridegroom addressed the girl of his liking and shaking her hand would say: *Ked' ti treba chlopa, pod' do popa* (If you need a husband, come to the priest). If the girl accepted the handshake, the bridegroom would then

negotiate with the girl's relatives about the 'gift' they required for agreeing with the marriage. Once the agreement was reached, the couple was wed in the monastery. There followed a customary feast consisting of eating, drinking, and dancing, and then the bridegroom took the bride to his home. There were occasional fights at the fair when the girl rejected the proposing bridegroom, and/or when her relatives would not agree to the marriage contract. Should the bridegroom be a wealthy man, however, the girl's family usually forced the girl to marry him even against her will. There were other cases when two young people had agreed to wed, but could not obtain the assent of the parents. In such cases, the bridegroom would 'kidnap' the bride, and her parents had no other choice but to agree to the wedding. This custom was practiced until 1720 when it was officially banned, and since then the wooing and marriages are arranged in a more agreeable manner."

This Rusyn custom described by Božena Němcová appeared to many outside observers as exotic and unnatural. For many Rusyns, however, it was quite natural and inevitable. As we have pointed out before, the main economic activity of the Rusyns was the breeding of cattle and sheep and related agricultural work. Rusyns lived mainly in small villages or in scattered settlements in the mountains, largely in isolation from the outside world or even from neighboring villages. It is obvious that meetings of young people from all over large areas, such as the "girls' fairs" in Krásny Brod, were organized in order to avoid inbreeding and to eliminate the risk of subsequent genetic degeneration.

As we have seen, the Pentecost or Rusalja festivities of the Rusyns were regarded as feasts of love and merriment, and they are documented in a number of Rusalja songs. However, not all social strata of Rusyn society had the same chance to enjoy the good side of these festivities. As one of the Rusalja songs recorded in the Prešov Region village of Kurov says:

Rusalja, Rusalja, bohate Rusalja,
A moje chudobne, bo nemam grajcara.
Pri čudžich voloňkach dňuju i nočuju,
Neraz sja hirkyma slyzami umyju.

(Rusalja, Rusalja, rich Rusalja,
My Rusalja is poor, for I am penniless.
I spend my days and nights with other people's cattle,
And more than once I wash myself in bitter tears.)

Though many of the Rusalja customs are no longer practiced today, it is significant that the first folk festivals of Czechoslovakia's Rusyns held in Medzilaborce and Svidník after 1945 took place exactly in the Rusalja period, thus uniting the spirit of modern times with the old traditions.

Mykola Mušynka

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1980 (continued)

Gardner, Johann von. "A Few Words on Church Chant in Carpatho-Russia," *Orthodox Life*, XXX, 1 (Jordanville, N.Y., 1980), pp. 46–50.

This brief article by a native of Serbia (and former teacher and Orthodox bishop in Subcarpathian Rus' during the interwar years) discusses a few aspects of Subcarpathian plain chant and its relationship to historic chants in other parts of medieval Kievan Rus'.

Halajda, Illja, ed. *O. A. Ljubymov 1898–1976.* Prešov: Kul'turnyj sojuz ukrajins'kych trudjaščych, 1980, 132 pp.

This popularly-written comprehensive work is the first biography of Oleksandr Andrijovyč Ljubymov, a Russian-born teacher and musician who was active as a director of various choirs and folk ensembles in the Rusyn-inhabited Prešov Region from the 1930s until the 1960s. Fifteen essays, most by those who remember Ljubymov, trace his cultural activity. Numerous photographs and a bibliography of Ljubymov's language textbooks and songbooks is appended.

Kol'esarov, Julijan D.M. *Ukrajinski nacionalizem i rusnaci* (Ukrainian Nationalism and the Rusnaks), Vol. 2. Montreal, 1980, 101 p.

This volume is written in the language of and deals with the Vojvodinian (Bačka) Rusyns/Rusnaks of Yugoslavia. The author, a native of the Bačka now living in Canada, is concerned primarily with criticizing those members of the local Yugoslav Rusyn intelligentsia who supposedly favor associating their people with the Ukrainian nationality. Despite the author's often emotional and even slanderous tone, this second volume is like the first (which appeared in 1975) particularly valuable for its long quotations and photographs of title pages of rare Rusyn journals and almanacs from the Vojvodina.

(Available gratis from Julijan Kolesar, 4875 Bourret Avenue, No. 203, Montreal, Quebec H3W 1L2.)

IN MEMORIAM

On Friday afternoon, January 27, 1984, Bishop Emil J. Mihalik fell asleep in the Lord. His initiative to bring the Cultural Roots Program to the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Parma will not be forgotten. His direct support, by financing adult workshops, research, publishing, and teaching, has helped religious, cultural, and social growth. Bishop Emil saw that the cohesion of religion, culture, and social activity builds a strong spiritual church.

The work of the Cultural Roots Program included a cantor's school and a methodical cantor's manual; Carpatho-Rusyn Christmas carols (koljadý) and customs; interviews with our immigrants and their descendants; printing cultural information brochures; teaching Carpatho-Rusyn singing, dancing, and customs in our schools; establishing the Kruzhok Ensemble; and taping experienced cantors to preserve their interpretation of the liturgical cycle.

This activity is a tribute to Bishop Emil's foresight, dedication, and love of his people. Our condolences to his family and relatives. *Vičnaja jemu pamjat'.*

Jerry Jumba

Part II — The National Archives

The National Archives in Washington, D. C. is the repository for some of our country's most treasured documents. Our nation's Constitution is painstakingly preserved in a sealed case and lowered into a vault each night or in case of emergency. However, few people realize the extent of the collection which is stored in the National Archives. Some of what has been preserved is of great value to those people searching for their family's past, particularly an immigrant past. Each year, thousands of amateur and professional genealogists throughout the country come here to use the vast research facilities.

The entrance to the research section of the National Archives is located in the rear of the building. After signing in with the security guard, you will be allowed access to the facilities. You will then be able to obtain free publications on which documents are available, including a booklet entitled *Getting Started: Beginning Your Genealogical Research in the National Archives.* This publication is invaluable as a guide and should be read before you begin your search. Records stored in the Archives which contain genealogical information are: Census Records, Military Service and Pension Records, Passenger Arrival Records, and Federal Land Records. These documents are recorded on microfilm and trained consultants are available to help you use them in your search.

The Census records are helpful only to those who have ancestors who lived in the United States between 1790 and 1910. Due to the privacy of information laws, the 1920 Census will not be available until 72 years after it was taken, that is, not until 1992. To use the records now available, it is important to know the full name of the head of the household and the state, county, and county subdivision in which the family lived. Military records are available for those who served in the United States military before World War I. If you have an ancestor who acquired land directly from the Federal Government in a public land sale, you can find the records here. But perhaps the records nearest and dearest to my heart—and the ones that caused the most pain/pleasure—are the Passenger Arrival Records. If you have an ancestor who immigrated to the United States by ship to an eastern or gulf coast port between 1819 and the 1940s, you should be able to find the Ship's Manifest. As this pertains to the greatest number of us, I will concentrate on this area in detail.

The Manifest will provide you with the names of individual passengers, their age, sex, marital status, occupation, whether they could read or write, country of citizenship, nationality, last permanent residence, nearest relative or friend in the country they came from, their final destination, by whom the passage was paid, how much money they had with them, whether they had ever been in the United States before, the name, address, and relationship of the person they were coming to join, general health and appearance, and the place of birth. To find the arrival records it is helpful to know the full name, date of entry, and port of entry. However, possessing only the names of my relatives and the knowledge that most of our Rusyn ancestors came through New York City, I was able to find the records of all four of my grandparents by using the so-called Soundex Coding System.

Soundex, an index developed by the Works Project Administration in the 1930s, is a system of grouping names according to the way they sound rather than by the way they are spelled. It is sufficient to say that each name has a code, and by using this code, along with the full name of the relative, it is possible to learn the location of the roll of microfilm containing the appropriate list. Soundex is easy to use and it is explained fully in the Archive's publications.

My own research was at times trying and at other times amazingly easy. Finding my maternal grandmother Theodora Nosal would have been, I felt, my most challenging task, for I had no other information other than her name. However, the simplicity of her name and my growing expertise in using both the system and the equipment allowed me to find her within an hour. Her husband-to-be, Peter Baysa, was a different story. The date he had claimed to be his arrival day was incorrect by more than a year; he was listed as Petro Bajsa (Soundex made the name change no problem); he was described as a seventeen year-old female (!); and the first digit of the microfilm number was wrong. However, the other information given about him confirmed what we already knew, so I realized that I had found the right man. Difficult, but not impossible.

My paternal grandmother, Paza Onufrak, had left us with her exact arrival date, so I went straight to the microfilm rolls and looked for her list by list. My search took three hours. Had I used the Soundex, I could have found the number of the microfilm frame the list was on and reduced my search time. But in the end, it was well worth the effort. The family legend was true. She did have only five dollars in her pocket. And among all the people coming from her village—which was known to be predominantly Rusyn—she was the only one who had listed her nationality as Ruthenian and not Slovak. (We were diehard Rusyns even then!) John (Iwan) Onufrak listed a brother Nikolai as his closest relative rather than his wife whom he left behind. Although I strongly feel that I have found the man I was looking for, further research is needed to erase any doubts. As I left the National Archives with my copies of the Ship's Lists, I felt appreciation for my difficult (by American standards) to pronounce name. Its very scarcity made it easier to locate, and I came to pity all the Smiths (Smyths) because of the long search that they would have ahead of them.

Searching for Passenger Arrival records is not an easy task. However, the thrill you experience when you locate your ancestors among the millions of names makes it all worthwhile. It is a very emotional experience when you realize that you have found the first record of their arrival in the New World. My successes in the National Archives make me anxious to continue this odyssey into my family's past.

Patricia A. Onufrak

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILWAUKEE
WISCONSIN
Permit No. 1744

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Published four times a year by the
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Fairview, New Jersey

Editor: **Patricia A. Krafcik**
Associate Editor: **Andrew G. Kovaly**
Assistant Editor: **Patricia A. Onufrak**
Business Manager: **Steve Mallick**

Communications concerning content should be sent to:

Patricia A. Krafcik, Editor
Department of Slavic Languages
University of Pittsburgh
Loeffler Building 120
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Annual subscription: $7.00
To subscribe, send check or money order to:

Carpatho-Rusyn American
5485 Forest Glen Road
North Madison, Ohio 44057

CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Vol. VII, No. 3 Fall, 1984

FROM THE EDITOR

During this past year, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* was in the capable hands of Associate Editor Andrew Kovaly and Assistant Editor Patricia Onufrak, and I wish to thank them for their conscientious work and cooperation. While they were writing and preparing issues for press, I was in Czechoslovakia researching the history and folk legend of Jánošík, the notorious and heroic Slovak brigand hero. This was not a simple task. Jánošík is the most famous Slavic brigand of the Robin Hood type, but is only one figure in a vast Carpathian and Balkan brigand-hero tradition stretching from Poland through Silesia, Moravia, Slovakia and the western Ukraine, down into Hungary and Romania, penetrating deep into Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece. Fascination with brigand heroes and their culture has inspired numerous writers, dramatists, and finally movie producers. With my husband Dan who accompanied me for the year abroad, I worked mostly in Bratislava as well as in Eastern Slovakia.

We arrived back in the States in early June, tugging a suitcase crammed with photocopies of research materials and with ten months of eventful experience behind us. Our three journeys to Eastern Slovakia to visit relatives were especially memorable moments. While we were grateful for the opportunity to become well-acquainted with our Slovak and Rusyn relatives and to strengthen these family bonds, in all honesty we sometimes felt that we had barely escaped with our lives under the pressure of our relatives' obsessive generosity.

We often recall our Christmas trip, for instance: first to Dan's substantially-padded cousins east of Prešov who pride themselves on being superb cooks and feel obliged to demonstrate this fact meal after dangerous meal, with meat and rice or potatoes swimming in thick gravies and huge slabs of homemade bread "modestly" spread with an inch of sweet butter (perhaps a satisfying meal if you've been mountain climbing or working the fields all day). And then there was the "drunken Isadore" (*opytý Isador*) cake. I was compelled to observe carefully every step in its four-hour production so that I "could also make it for Dan later." Into this cake went fourteen eggs and several pounds of cocoa, nuts, sugar, all saturated with rum. I almost fainted when a piece of the finished product was offered to me. Dan begged me never to make it. At last we understood that the chilled vodka and plum brandy urged upon us at breakfast were in fact wisely intended to prepare the bodily system for the rigors of the day's meals to come!

On Christmas Eve Day, in trepidation of more of the same, we caught a bus to Prešov and north up through L'ubotín, arriving early afternoon in Ruská Vol'a. To our relief, we discovered that my cousins were keeping a strict fast that day, and although they would have fed us, we were only too glad to fast with them. They appeared bewildered at our overwhelming delight in joining the fast, but clearly approved our decision. Around seven (and actually hungry!) we all washed our hands and faces, as tradition dictates, so that we would be as healthy and hearty as the chill mountain water. We each said a silent prayer and sat down to the ritual Christmas Eve dinner or *Velija*.

The first course was a small clove of garlic considered a potent curative element, eaten with a bite of dark bread and dashed down quickly with whiskey — also, we were told, for medicinal reasons. Supper consisted of a thick sauerkraut soup, fish and potatoes, poppyseed and honey over tiny bread dumplings, and stewed fruit. Most of the age-old traditions I had read about which were still observed in Rusyn villages as recently as the 1920s were missing, at least in this home and at least as far as I could see. The mistress of the house failed to toss cooked wheat into the four corners of the room, saying: "Just as this wheat doesn't stay on the walls, so let no sickness come to our sheep and cattle." Life is different now: The sheep and cattle are well cared for in the village communal facilities. No chain was fastened about the legs of the table "to keep the family together." Instead, my mother's cousin and his wife were sufficiently satisfied that their two grown sons had been able to get away from their professional jobs in far-away Bratislava in order to share even a few days of this holiday with them. And they know very well that neither son will ever return to the village permanently.

After exchanging gifts, we all walked over a mile down the dark road from Vol'a to the larger neighboring village of Čirč for the midnight Nativity service. The Greek Catholic church was festooned with winter greenery, lights, and ribbons, and adorned with an elaborate crèche in front of which all the parishioners knelt and prayed before the service. The lovely Carpathian plainchant rose and fell, filtered hauntingly into my consciousness, sated with memories of the Christmas Eve dinner and fatigued by the late hour. We returned to Ruská Vol'a by three a.m., and were up again without a whimper at eight for another service, this time in the Vol'a church, followed by a festive dinner and visits to more relatives in the area.

Our last stop was at my father's Slovak Roman Catholic cousins in Košice, a more citified family, but just as warm and at times as dangerously generous as our village relatives. The fast was over and clearly they were feasting. We knew immediately that our visit would be brief. Enough is enough. Luckily, my younger cousins there are more concerned about their physical fitness; therefore, to refuse second helpings is not the major felony that it is elsewhere. Dan and I refused much and actually got away with it. Perhaps it was around this time that I began to perceive Jánošík's brigand life as wonderfully desirable for its tough, exhilirating physical activity, its leanness, freedom among the green hills, and its feasts mercifully few and far between. I must remember all this when I'm writing my book on Jánošík. It is an insight available only in the context of the old country and among family!

Dan and I made it back to Bratislava in order to spend a quiet New Year's Eve — alone, over a simple roasted chicken and a bottle of champagne. I recall that we needed several weeks to recover from our Christmas journey. But by April we were heading back east to Ruská Vol'a, Čirč, and Košice, this time with my mother and brothers in tow to introduce them to the relatives. They had innocently planned their visit to coincide with Easter, another holiday of fasting — and, yes, feasting — Dan and I thought with a shiver. We did survive it, obviously, but that is a tale for another issue.

FRANTIŠEK TICHÝ (1886-1968)

The activities of František Tichý were rich and varied. He was a writer (under the pseudonym Zdeněk Broman), a translator, teacher, historian, literary scholar, linguist, editor, and adult educator. He left his imprint mainly on Czech culture, although his lifelong love was for Subcarpathian Rus'. He was born on May 21, 1886, in the village of Chyňava near Beroun in central Bohemia. He studied at universities in Prague and Leipzig, Germany. After World War I, he became the director of a grammar school in Prešov, Eastern Slovakia, and in 1923 he became an editor of the first Subcarpathian daily *Rusyn* in Užhorod.

Tichý's main interest in connection with Subcarpathian Rus' was the history of Rusyn literature. He was the author of pioneering studies on several outstanding nineteenth-century Rusyn scholars and cultural personalities: Bazylovyč, Fogarašyj- Berežanyn, Lučkaj (author of the first published Subcarpathian grammar of 1830), Baludjans'kyj (the first head of St. Petersburg, now Leningrad, University), Danylovyč-Korytnjans'kyj, and the three leading nineteenth-century Rusyn national awakeners Duchnovyč, Pavlovyč, and Dobrians'kyj. He also devoted articles and studies to two leading twentieth-century Rusyn personalities: Havrijil Kostel'nyk, who in 1906 codified the standard literary language still used by Carpatho-Rusyn settlers in the Bačka (Vojvodina) region in Yugoslavia; and the Subcarpathian writer Vasyl' Grendža-Dons'kyj. In addition, he was the author of a number of studies on the whole historical development of Rusyn literature in Subcarpathian Rus'.

His contributions to the popularization of Rusyn literature include the publication in 1922 of a collection of selected poems by Duchnovyč, *Poeziji Aleksandra Duchnovyča* (Poetry of Alexander Duchnovyč), the first and only separate collection of his verse until 1963. Tichý also paid great attention to unpublished literature of the Rusyns. In 1931, he produced a monograph on the "Moscow collection" of Rusyn manuscripts from the Šariš area (northeastern Slovakia) — thus named because the manuscripts are deposited in one of Moscow's libraries. As a collector of folk literature, especially folk legends, he published in 1927 in a Czech translation, Historical Legends from Subcarpathian Rus' (*Pověsti z Podkarpatské Rusi*). In the same year he visited the Rusyn settlements in Yugoslavia where he was a pioneer in collecting their folksongs. He also wrote a number of informative articles on the Bačka Rusyns in the Czechoslovak press, as well as a number of entries on Carpatho-Rusyns for the famous Czech encyclopedia *Ottův slovník naučný nové doby* (Otto's Modern Encyclopedia). Last, but not least, he authored several articles on the relations between Carpatho-Rusyns and the Czechs and Slovaks.

Tichý's most important work, however, is the monograph, The Development of Standard Language in Subcarpathian Rus' (*Vývoj spisovného jazyka na Podkarpatské Rusi*, Prague, 1938). In it Tichý outlined the language development and the main tendencies toward a unifying language in the Subcarpathian region from the fifteenth century to the mid-1930s. Although he viewed attempts at the creation of a separate "Subcarpathian language" based on local dialects as a step in the right direction, he predicted the inevitable integration of this language into standard Ukrainian.

After World War II, Tichý increased his contacts with the Rusyn-Ukrainians of the Prešov Region. He participated in two scholarly conferences on Czechoslovak-Ukrainian relations held in Prešov in 1956 and 1965 and was a regular contributor to Prešov-based Ukrainian periodicals.

František Tichý died of heart failure on April 1, 1968, in a field near his native village as he was returning from a visit to the grave of his wife. A part of his estate has been donated to the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Eastern Slovakia. This includes also the as yet unpublished manuscript of his monograph entitled *Five Hundred Years of Subcarpathian Literature*. His private library of almost 20,000 volumes has been bequeathed to the State Scholarly Library in Prešov.

In summary, we could say that Tichý's contribution to research into Carpatho-Rusyn culture has not yet received the appreciation appropriate to its significance. There have been so far no book publications of his valuable studies that are dispersed in various periodicals and scholarly volumes now often difficult to find. There is no doubt that book publication of his most important studies would considerably enrich our understanding of Carpatho-Rusyn literature, language, history, and related scholarly disciplines.

Mykola Mušynka

ÓNDRA ŁYSOHORSKY, BARD OF SILESIA

The author of this article, Kevin J. Hannan, is a subscriber and contributor to the Carpatho-Rusyn American *(Vol. V, No. 1, 1982), who traces his ethnic roots to southeastern Silesia. Like Subcarpathian Rusyns in Europe, Hannan's Silesian ancestors inhabit a border region, specifically the north-central border of Czechoslovakia. Subject to Polish, Moravian, Bohemian, Slovak, and even German influences, they never developed their own national identity in Europe. Many of their immigrants settled in central Texas and are called Czechs, although they speak their own dialect and differ from Bohemian Czechs. While not identical in all ways to the Rusyn experience, the Silesian experience still provides us with special insight into the life and culture of a small Slavic borderland people. It is in part for this reason that we offer Hannan's piece on Silesian poet Óndra Łysohorsky. — Editor*

Born in Frýdek on the Ostravica,
I pick among the branches of our galaxy
the fruit of ultimate human knowledge:
respect for life.

Appalled
I watch
how throughout human history
the one-day tyrants' reply
to the poet-rebels
who understand the meaning of that fruit
has been the gag,
sneers,
calumny,
prison bars
and death.

But for all time to come
the poets will never cease
to reach out for this most precious of all fruits
and bear it before them
like a monstrance:
the heart,
the meaning of
the universe.

(*Autobiography and Universe*, 1965)

Located between the regions of Moravia and Silesia in modern-day Czechoslovakia are the Beskyd Mountains. The highest peak of the Beskyds is Łysa Hora, the Bald Mountain. Łysa Hora is a symbol of the cruel natural environment and stark poverty of the region. It was from the summit of Łysa Hora that Ondráš, the eighteenth-century Silesian Robin Hood and folk hero engaged in his struggle with the authorities. In the early decades of the twentieth century, a young poet named Ervín Goy created the pen-name Óndra Łysohorsky from the names of these two regional symbols, Ondráš and Łysa Hora. He grew to become the most eloquent voice of his native region of Lašsko (the Lachian Land) and at the same time evolved into a literary figure of world importance.

Łysohorsky was born in Frýdek in 1905, the ninth son of

an impoverished miner. At an early age, Łysohorsky was aware of the sense of isolation and oppression which the people of his region felt. Located in the barren Beskyd Mountains far from Prague, Warsaw, and Vienna, Lašsko was virtually unknown to the world until coal began to be mined there in the early nineteenth century. The coal mines were a mixed blessing for the region, bringing the common citizen more misery than prosperity.

Łysohorsky entered a local German school when he reached school age. Although Czechs formed a majority of the population, in 1913 no Czech school existed in the area. Łysohorsky excelled in his studies, received a scholarship, and went on to study in Prague, Paris, and Rome. He received his doctorate in 1928. From 1930 until the Nazi occupation he taught in Slovakia. In late 1938, he was dismissed from his post in Bratislava for refusing to collaborate with the increasingly nationalist Slovak and pro-German authorities. He fled to Poland in 1939, where he joined the Czechoslovak forces which were shortly thereafter interned by the occupying Soviet Army. After nine months, Łysohorsky was released by the Soviets and he went on to Moscow, where he obtained a teaching post.

Łysohorsky had already created a sensation in Czechoslovakia in 1934 with the publication of his volume of verse *Spjéwajuco piaść* (The Singing Fist). This work and the following volume, *Hłos hrudy* (The Voice of the Native Soil), were written entirely in Łysohorsky's native Lachian dialect. In his love for his homeland and its speech, Łysohorsky created a literary language which corresponds to the speech of Lašsko. Another Silesian poet, Petr Bezruč, had achieved popularity in Czechoslovakia at the turn of the century with his book *Slezské písně* (Silesian Songs). But Bezruč wrote in standard literary Czech and only employed a sprinkling of words from Silesian dialect. Łysohorsky, on the other hand, chose to write entirely in his native dialect, elevating this speech to the status of a literary language.

The tiny region of Lašsko is found at a crossroads where the Czech, Polish, and Slovak languages meet. During the

period of Austrian rule, which lasted until the end of the First World War, if an individual wanted to receive an education and advance in society it was necessary to adopt the German language. Not surprisingly, many German words and expressions found their way into the dialect of the region.

Although Silesian dialect is spoken by a relatively small group of people, linguists argue that it is actually a language separate from both Czech and Polish. The differences between Silesian dialect and both Czech and Polish developed at the same point in history when Czech, Polish, and the other West Slavic languages were evolving as separate languages. On this basis, linguists state that Silesian dialect is an offshoot of neither Czech nor Polish. Interestingly enough, Czech and Slovak, now recognized as two distinct languages, separated from each other later than did Czech and Silesian and are more similar to each other than are Czech and Silesian.

Even though Lašsko had for centuries been politically associated with Bohemia, the inhabitants did not identify themselves as Czechs. On the other hand, they also never developed a strong national identity, so that until recent times a native of the region would refer to himself a Šlonzak (Silesian) or a Moravec (Moravian). And these names referred more to regional than ethnic identity. Matters of national allegiance and ethnic identity were further complicated by an influx of Polish settlers from Galicia who came in the nineteenth century to work the coal mines. Recognizing the similarities between the Lachian dialect and the Polish language, these Polish immigrants insisted that Lašsko was part of the Polish nation and Lachian a dialect of Polish.

By the outbreak of World War I, Lašsko had become a strategic industrial center. After the war, the region was quickly claimed by both Czechoslovakia and Poland. Despite Polish protests Lašsko was awarded to Czechoslovakia. The Prague government, however, failed in many respects to nurture a deeply-felt Czech national identity among the people of the region. Instead, the people of Lašsko retained their long-held feelings of alienation and isolation. Czech politicians were deeply concerned about the possible political consequences of a Silesian separatist movement, concerns which intensified by 1938, when Poland demanded and then occupied a portion of Czech Silesia.

Łysohorsky's insistence on writing in his native dialect had from the start created difficulties for him. He angered certain Czech politicians who felt that Czech political sovereignty in Silesia was threatened by the development of Silesian national consciousness. Silesian writers in the past had been content to use either literary Czech or Polish. Łysohorsky, however, would continue to write his poetry in Lachian dialect, even when this act met with strong disapproval. Zdeněk Nejedlý, at the time an important Communist Party official and later Minister of Education in the postwar Czechoslovak Communist government, asked Łysohorsky in 1943 to stop writing in Lachian dialect. Nejedlý and the Communists also felt that Łysohorsky's efforts were obstructing the development of a Czech national awareness in Silesia.

Ironically, Łysohorsky had at the start of his literary career received a stamp of approval from the Communists. Much of his early poetry deals with social issues and he especially sought to draw attention to the plight of the exploited miners and other poor of his region. Following his move in 1939 to the Soviet Union, Łysohorsky became quite popular there and was befriended by important Soviet Communists. Zdeněk Nejedlý and other Czech Communists also had influence in Moscow, however, and their complaints against Łysohorsky began to be voiced there. As a result, Łysohorsky suddenly found himself out of favor with editors and publishing houses. He was expelled from the Czechoslovak section of the Moscow All-Slav Committee and was accused of aiding Hitler's war effort. As the campaign of defamation against him intensified, Łysohorsky decided to appeal directly to Stalin. The result was vindication. He was rehabilitated and received permission to continue writing in Lachian. Stalin's decree did nothing to soothe relations between Łysohorsky and the émigré Czechoslovak Communists also living in Moscow, who bitterly resented Łysohorsky's stubborn refusal to buckle under to their demands, as well as his appeal directly to the Soviet leader.

Following Łysohorsky's return to Czechoslovakia after the war, the campaign of defamation against him was renewed. The name fascist was repeatedly hurled at him. His poetry was banned and volumes of his older works were confiscated from publishers. In 1961, a senior official of the Czechoslovak Communist Party's Central Committee decreed: "It is forbidden to publish Ondra Lysohorsky's poems in the original Lachian. . . . If from time to time some texts appear, then these must be in [Czech] translation."

In recent years, Łysohorsky's work has become increasingly popular throughout the world, appearing in Russian, French, German, Hungarian, and other languages. Several translations by W. H. Auden have also appeared in English. One of his translators, Ewald Osers, posed the question whether it is a piece of good fortune for Silesian dialect or a misfortune for world literature that Łysohorsky's native tongue is Lachian. As Osers points out, he would have been an important poet in any language. His significance precisely as a poet cannot be obscured by his efforts to raise Lachian dialect to the status of a literary language. It is chiefly for his poetry that the world will ultimately remember him, and it remains unfortunate that the inaccessibility of his native speech and the political oppression visited upon him have denied him the recognition he deserves.

Despite the criticism directed at him as a stubborn and eccentric regionalist poet, Łysohorsky's outlook is universal. His work also embraces the idealized Slavic virtue of peaceful coexistence and love for humanity. Finally, Łysohorsky's unwavering devotion to his native land can best be felt in his own words from the collection, *On Łysa Hora*:

Summit of the highest mountain. Beneath me the mist.
Forests, towns, and rivers are concealed!
Here the naked rock, a few bushes —
why has my path taken me so high?

And there above the thick fog, in limitless glory
the sun rings throughout space the crystal bell of
the heavens —
fear and vertigo; suddenly I feel my heart collapse.
Without my native land, eternity, what are you for me?

Kevin J. Hannan
Dallas, Texas

THE GENEALOGY OF SISTER MIRIAM TERESA DEMJANOVIČ

As the process of beatification nears completion, it seems that Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovič may become the first American saint of Slavic descent in the Catholic Church. As part of the heightened interest in these developments, there have appeared recently several publications which have attempted — without any original documentary evidence — to prove that Sister Miriam Teresa was of Slovak background. The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center was contacted for an opinion. Since Sister Miriam Teresa was born in the United States, she is first and foremost an American. Moreover, her ethnicity — or more precisely the ethnic origins of her immigrant parents — can hardly have had an impact on whether or not she led a saintly life. Nonetheless, in response to requests regarding Sister Miriam Teresa's "roots," our Center commissioned a distinguished scholar in Czechoslovakia to research this matter. The following are his findings.—Editor

The name of Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovič (1901-1927), an American of Slavic origin, has in the past decades been ever more in the focus of public interest. This interest was revived in 1946 when the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church initiated the process of her beatification. In the United States, the interest in her personality has been kept alive by the Sister Miriam Teresa League founded more than a quarter of a century ago. Its quarterly, *The Sister Miriam Teresa League Bulletin*, informs its readers in detail about her activities, writings, etc. The popularity of Sister Miriam Teresa in Roman Catholic circles is further enhanced on a world-wide scale by new translations of her books. Her best-known work, *Greater Perfection*, first published in 1928, has been translated into a number of languages, including Chinese. Her life and work are the subject of a number of monographs. It is, however, surprising that in spite of the detailed coverage of individual stages of her life, all the monographs are rather nebulous if not misleading as to the question of her ethnic origins.

Until recently, the only safe thing to say about her ethnicity was that her parents Alexander-Jakub and Joanna left their hometown of Bardejov in northeastern Slovakia in the 1880s and emigrated to the United States in search of better economic opportunities. It was there on March 26, 1901, that their daughter Teresa was born, the last of seven siblings all born on American soil. However, recent information from University of Toronto Professor Paul R. Magocsi concerning the marriage of Sister Miriam Teresa's parents in the Rusyn village of Rešov (Rjašiv) some time in 1883 or 1884 (shortly before their departure to the United States), provides a clue to the solution of the question of the Demjanovič family's ethnic background.

Church records in Czechoslovakia offer additional and vital information. The parish marriage register of the Greek Catholic Church in Rešov began in 1854, with entries in the Cyrillic alphabet until 1857 and in Latin and Hungarian using Roman script from 1858. That register contains the following Latin entry on the marriage of Sister Miriam Teresa's parents: "1884, No. 2. Date of wedding: February 18. Name of bridegroom: Alexander-Jakub Demjanovič. Place of residence: Bardejov, No. 103. Religion: Greek Catholic. Age: 24. Status: single. Parents: Jakub Demjanovič and Joanna Artim. Bride: Joanna Suchyj. Place of residence: Zabava, No. 91. Religion: Greek Catholic. Status: single. Parents: Ioan Suchyj, blacksmith in Zabava, and Mária Rojkovič. Witnesses: Ignac Timko, administrator in Geralt and Alexander Frölich of Bardejov."

The parish birth register contains the following entry on Sister Miriam Teresa's father: "1860, No. 14. Date of birth: July 16. Date of christening: July 19. Name of child: Alexander-Jakub. Sex: male, born in wedlock. Parents: Jakub Demjanovič, Greek Catholic, master shoemaker in Bardejov, and Joanna Artim, Greek Catholic. Godparents: Stanislav Szmolikovský, primary school teacher in Bardejov, Roman Catholic, and Rozalia Geffert, Roman Catholic. The child was baptized by the Very Reverend Čurilla, cathedral chaplain of Bardejov. Authenticated by Antonin Kiš, parish priest of Rešov." The entry on Sister Miriam Teresa's mother in the same parish register includes the following data: "1859, No. 11. Date of birth: July 30. Date of christening: August 2. Name of child: Joanna. Sex: female, born in wedlock. Parents: Ioan Suchyj, blacksmith in Zabava, and Mária Rojkovič, both Greek Catholics. Place of residence: Zabava, No. 91. Godparents: František Bohinský, Roman Catholic, magistrate of Zabava, and Anna, peasant. The child was baptized by Antonin Kiš, parish priest of Rešov."

There also exists some interesting supplementary information on the background of Sister Miriam Teresa's father Alexander-Jakub. Entries in the parish register refer to his older sister Mária, born in 1853 and married in 1869 to Alexander Frölich, a butcher in Bardejov. Another sister, born in 1854, was married in 1876 to Andrej Žak-Novotný, police sergeant in Široké near Prešov. Alexander-Jakub's brother Antonin-Michal, born in 1858, died in 1860 at the age of one and one-half years. Alexander-Jakub's younger

brother Jakub-Antonin was born in 1866 and was baptized by Father Ambrosius at the St. Francis monastery in Bardejov. His entry in the Greek Catholic Rešov parish register made four months later was signed by Vicar Ioan Artim. No other entries which could be unequivocally identified as referring to further siblings of Sister Miriam Teresa's father have been found in the Rešov register.

Sister Miriam Teresa's mother Joanna had an older sister Mária, born in 1838, who in 1862 married a farmer Hofmann, a Lutheran from Klušov near Bardejov. There is circumstantial evidence that this couple's daughter was godmother to Sister Miriam Teresa. Another older sister of her mother, born in 1853, was married in 1872 to Ioan Dzijak, a teacher in Bogljarka near Bardejov, and a native of Geralt. A brother of Sister Miriam Teresa's mother, Adalbert, was born in 1857.

Although the parish register entries offer what appears to be rather sparse information, they actually provide a wealth of interesting data. It becomes apparent, for instance, that both families of Sister Miriam Teresa's parents belonged to highly respected artisan circles in Bardejov and its surroundings. The Demjanovičs were a family of shoemakers, the Suchyjs a family of smiths. Although there are as yet no reliable data available on the places of origin of the ancestors of these two families, there remains no doubt as to their Rusyn ethnic origins. The names of Demjanovič (derived from the East Slavic proper name Demjan), Suchyj, Artim, and Rojkovič occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries almost exclusively among Rusyns living in what was then Upper Hungary — especially among Rusyn intelligentsia such as priests and teachers — and only as a rare exception among Slovaks (presumably Slovakized Rusyns).

Another indication of a person's ethnic origins in the nineteenth century and earlier was his or her religious affiliation. The Greek Catholic faith (which was the Orthodox faith here until the 1646 Union of Užhorod with the Roman Catholic Church) was in popular parlance called "the Rusyn faith" (*rusínska, ruská vira*). It was automatically connected with the Rusyns or Rusnaks, as they were also called. Bardejov in the nineteenth century was an important trade center and it attracted settlers from various parts of the country and abroad, including Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Jews, and Rusyns. The nearby Rusyn villages provided Bardejov with its share of artisans, tradesmen, and servants of both sexes, all of them Greek Catholics. Membership in the Greek Catholic Church and Rusyn ethnicity were identical in the area of Upper Šaris county, unlike in Zemplin county where the ethnic-religious relationship had become more complex. Since some of the members of the Demjanovič family came from the Rusyn villages of Petrova and Andrejova, and members of the Suchyj family from Orlov and Šemetkovce, all of which retain their Rusyn character to this day, this would seem to provide evidence that Sister Miriam Teresa's ethnic origins were Rusyn.

The fact that her father was baptized in a Bardejov Roman Catholic church can be explained by the distance of the nearest Greek Catholic parish in Rešov, which was 13 kilometers away. This remained the case until 1903, when a new Greek Catholic parish was established in Bardejov. The Rešov parish also included Zabava, the village of Sister Miriam Teresa's mother, now a suburb of Bardejov. According to the provisions of the 1646 Union of Užhorod, the Roman Church could also provide baptism for children of Greek Catholic parents. However, when these parents did not wish the child to become a member of the Roman Catholic Church, they later had the baptism registered with the Greek Catholic parish in Rešov. This, then, was the case with Sister Miriam Teresa's father. In fact, most of the children of Jakub Demjanovič were baptized by Roman Catholic priests (apparently in their own home). None of them was registered by the Bardejov Roman Catholic parish, while all of them have their entries in the Rešov Greek Catholic parish register. At the same time it must be noted that the Demjanovičs, like most other Bardejov patricians, were clearly ecumenically minded and often entered into marriages with Christians of Roman Catholic and Lutheran denominations who were of equally high social status.

One last note concerns the argument often used in favor of the Demjanovičs' alleged Slovak origins. It is conceivable that Sister Miriam Teresa's parents, in fact, spoke the Šariš dialect of Slovak, and that they apparently continued to use it in America as well. The explanation for this fact is simple: among the multiethnic inhabitants of Bardejov (and for that matter other near-by towns), the Šariš variety of Slovak had developed into a sort of *lingua franca*, that is, a unifying language enabling communication among the various ethnic groups settled there. Given the relatively small percentage of Rusyns living then in Bardejov and their dispersal among the majority Slovak-speaking population, it should not be surprising that the Demjanovičs adopted this Slovak dialect as well. Such bilingualism, however, is hardly a proof of their Slovak ethnicity as many of Sister Miriam Teresa's biographers have contended so far.

It is to be hoped that this outline, however tentative, of the Demjanovič family background, has contributed to clearing up the question of Sister Miriam Teresa's origins, and that it will become a stimulus for more definitive research in the future.

Mykola Mušynka
Prešov, Czechoslovakia

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1980 (continued)

Krempa, Ivan. "Prisoedinenie Zakarpatskoj Ukrainy k Čechoslovakii" (The Unification of the Transcarpathian Ukraine with Czechoslovakia), *Historica*, XX (Prague, 1980), pp. 135–175.

This extensive Russian-language article traces in detail the manner in which the Rusyn-inhabited lands south of the Carpathian Mountains were united with Czechoslovakia in late 1918–1919. The author devotes much attention to the activity of the Rusyn-born American lawyer, Gregory Žatkovič, during this period, although following the guidelines of present-day official Soviet and Czechoslovak historiography, he stresses that the unification ostensibly took place against the will of the Carpatho-Rusyn population.

Krempa, Ivan. "Rolnické hnutí na Zakarpatsku v první polovině roku 1921" (The Peasant Movement in Transcar-

pathia in the First Half of 1921), *Československý časopis historický*, XXVIII, 2 (Prague, 1980), pp. 216–238.

This Czech-language study based on local archival sources analyzes the attempts of the Subcarpathian International Socialist Party to address the problem of poverty among small landowners and agricultural workers in Subcarpathian Rus'.

Kultura: časopis za kulturu rusnacoch (Culture: A Journal of Rusyn Culture), Vol. I, No. 1 (Montreal, 1980), 101 p.

This volume is written and produced entirely by Julijan Kolesar. The various articles deal mostly with the Rusyns/Rusnaks living in the Vojvodina (Bačka) region of Yugoslavia.

(Available gratis from Julijan Kolesar, 4875 Bourret Avenue, No. 203, Montreal, Quebec H3W 1L2.)

Magocsi, Paul R. "Carpatho-Rusyns," in Stephan Thernstrom, ed., *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980, pp. 200–210.

Carpatho-Rusyns are treated as a distinct group among 106 that are described in this first encyclopedia of all ethnic groups inhabiting the United States. Rusyn Americans of all religious backgrounds are discussed. There are sections on migration and arrival, settlement patterns, economic life, religion, social organization, culture, politics, intergroup relations, ethnic commitment, and group maintenance. There is also a brief description of Lemkians (Lemkos) in the United States (Carpatho-Rusyns from southern Galicia), statistical tables, a map showing political and ethnolinguistic boundaries, and select bibliography. This is the best available introduction to Carpatho-Rusyn life in the United States.

Medješi, Ljubomir. "Rusinska svadba i njeno mesto u svadbenim običajima slovenskich naroda" (The Rusyn Wedding and Its Place in the Wedding Customs of the Slavic Nations), *Rad Vojvodanskich Muzeja*, no. 26 (Novi Sad, 1980), pp. 133–140.

According to the author, the migrational displacement of Vojvodinian (Bačka) Rusyns, who left their homeland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has helped them to preserve with little change their traditional wedding customs. Many of these customs, once widespread among other Slavic peoples as well, are still found among the Rusyns in the Vojvodina.

Mušynka, Mykola. "Emilij Kubek — peršyj romanist Zakarpattja" (Emilij Kubek — the First Novelist in Transcarpathia), in *Ukrajins'kyj kalendar 1980*. Warsaw, 1980, pp. 213–215.

This article provides a brief biography of Kubek (see also the *C-RA*, Vol. VI, No. 2, 1983, p. 3) and an extensive description of his novel *Marko Šoltys*, published in 1920. Mušynka considers this the first novel in Subcarpathian Rusyn literature, even though it was published in the United States, where Kubek had been living since 1904.

Mol'nar, Mychajlo. *Zustriči kul'tur: z čechoslovac'ko-ukrajins'kych vzajemovidnosyn* (The Meeting of Cultures: On Czechoslovak and Ukrainian Interrelations). Bratislava and Prešov: Slovac'ke pedahohične vydavnyctvo, viddil ukrajins'koji literatury, 1980, 542 pp.

Mychajlo Mol'nar, a member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, is a specialist on Czech, Slovak, and Ukrainian literary and cultural relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This collection contains 41 studies previously published by the author on this subject as well as a complete bibliography of his writings. Six studies deal specifically with Carpatho-Rusyn literary figures, including Mol'nar's extensive biography of the Ukrainian-language author from Subcarpathian Rus', Vasyl' Grendža-Dons'kyj (pp. 388–447), and shorter studies on Aleksander Duchnovyč, Julij Boršoš-Kum"jac'kyj, Iryna Nevyc'ka, Fedir Lazoryk, and Marija Dufanec'.

Myhalyč, Ivan, ed. *Kamjana, Kamjana: zbirnyk pisen' iz Labirščyny* (Kamjana: A Collection of Songs from the Laborec' Region). Prešov: Kul'turnyj sojuz ukrajins'kych trudjaščych ČSSR, 1980, 62 pp.

This small brochure contains 40 Carpatho-Rusyn folksongs copied down in 1975 in several villages of the upper Laborec' Valley (from Krásny Brod to Čertižné) in the Prešov Region of northeastern Czechoslovakia. Musical scores and texts are provided for each song.

Naukovyj zbirnyk Muzeju ukrajins'koji kul'tury u Svydnyku (Scholarly Anthology of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník), Vol. IX, pt. 1 (Svidník, Bratislava, and Prešov, 1980), 672 pp.

This volume of the *Naukovyj zbirnyk* includes sixteen studies dealing with history, literature, ethnography, language, and recent cultural activity in the Prešov Region. Among the most extensive works are those that deal with socioeconomic developments in the Prešov Region during the 1930s and 1940s (by Andrij Kovač); an analysis of Jakiv Holovac'kyj's nineteenth-century collection of Subcarpathian Rusyn folktales (by Olena Rudlovčak); a biography of the late nineteenth-century Rusyn writer Anatolij Kralyc'kyj (by Jolana Holenda); the history of outdoor ethnographic museums including the one partially completed in Svidník (by Myroslav Sopolyha); a biography of the twentieth-century musiocologist and folklorist Jurij Kostjuk (by Ivan Rusynko); a history of radio programs for Subcarpathian Rusyns since the late 1920s (by Mychajlo Kantuljak); and a history of the Dukla Ukrainian Dance Ensemble of Prešov (by Jurij Cymbora). Of particular interest is the monograph (pp. 303–444) and linguistic atlas with 50 maps, illustrations, and index on traditional domestic utensils in the Prešov Region (by Zuzana Hanudel'), and a description (by Stepan Hostynjak) of a Czech motion picture film made in 1934, "Marijka nevěrnice." The latter is about life in a Rusyn village in Subcarpathian Rus', which featured local inhabitants speaking in Rusyn and which was produced and directed by some of the leading Czech authors of the day, Ivan Olbracht and Vladislav Vančura, with a musical score by Bohuslav Martinů.

The whole volume includes numerous photographs and illustrations, as well as a geographic and personal name index.

FOLK CUSTOMS OF CARPATHO-RUSYNS
THE PASTORAL FESTIVALS: ST. GEORGE'S DAY

In all Slavic and in many non-Slavic nations, St. George is regarded as the patron saint of peasants (in fact, the original meaning of the Greek *Georgos* and the Latinized *Georgius* is peasant). Since the most frequent agricultural activity among the Carpatho-Rusyns was the breeding of cattle and sheep, St. George was regarded mainly as the patron of breeders. The celebration of St. George's Day on May 6th was marked by the bringing of the cattle to pasture for the first time in the year, and the whole procedure was accompanied by a number of magic rituals.

Among these rituals were the following: each cow was smeared with an egg (usually an Easter egg) in order to assure that it put on weight; it was sprinkled with holy water to ensure its good health; and it was fed with bread, salt, and garlic (the symbols of health and fertility) so that it multiply. A chain and a lock were put under the threshold of the shed to "keep the cattle together"; and the cows were driven through a fire behind the village to rid them of illnesses. Sometimes the cowherds symbolically beat the cattle three times with a willow or hazel branch to make the animals grow well; the horns of cows and oxen were decorated with wreaths of wintergreen to ensure that the cattle had sufficient fodder; or the cowherds ran three times around the whole herd with a burning Candlemas candle in their hand or with incense produced from dried green leaves collected on the last St. John's Day (June 24th) in order to drive all evil spirits away from the cattle. The cowherds might also blow horns, ring bells, crack their whips, or shoot in the air to repel witches and other demonic beings believed to pester the cattle.

An extraordinarily great number of magic rituals used to be connected with bringing sheep to the *polonyna*, or mountain pasture. In most of these rituals the shepherds invoked the aid of St. George as the protector of farm animals. There was a number of special magic formulas aimed at the protection of sheep which were passed on from one generation to another, and which were scrupulously kept secret by the husbandmen. The knowledge of these formulas and other magical and veterinary practices was held in high esteem as the hallmark of supreme command of the shepherd's profession. Here is an example of one of these magic formulas collected from Jan Poljanskyj, a resident of the village of Jakubany near Stará L'ubovňa:

Svatyj Georgiju,
Maju v tja nadiju,
Na tja upoveju,
Voz' ključi od raju,
A zamkny naš košar
I cilyj naš chotar
Pred vovkom ryskuščym,
I zmijom plazuščym,
Pred nevčasnom zimom
I pekučym litom,
Pred bidom i psotom,
Pred planom chorotom,
Pred paňskom zljiščom
I ljudskom zavijščom.
Ochraň našy uvci,
Naj ša trimut v kupci,
Daj jim vodu zdravu,
Spust' rosu na travu,
Pasy na cilyj rik,
Zdravja na cilyj vik, Amiň!

St. George,
You are my hope.
I beg you,
Please take the keys from paradise,
And lock up our fold,
And all our field
From the evil wolf,
From the creeping snake,
From early winter,
From blazing summer,
From misery and bad luck,
From pestering illness,
From ill moods of the overlords
And human envy.
Please protect our sheep,
So that they keep together,
Provide them with good water,
Drop dew on the grass,
Give us graze for the whole year,
And health for all time. Amen!

The magic rituals concerning sheep were sometimes connected with a special dance called *ovčij zdych*, i.e., "the death of a sheep," which portrayed the gradual dying of a sheep during an epidemic.

When the flock of sheep was returned to the fold and when the symbolic bonfire which was to burn until the end of the grazing season in late fall was kindled by a "living flame" (fire made by rubbing wood against wood), selected shepherds would arrange a rite called *mira*. In the presence of the owner of the sheep they would milk each animal, and according to the amount of milk thus gained, they made a contract with the owner about the amount of cheese they were to deliver to him in the course of the summer. An agreed amount was recorded by means of notches made on a special stick (*rovaš* or *mira*). The ceremony ended with a feast which often developed into a real revelry in which all the young people of the village participated. Recently there has been a symbolical revival of this custom in Soviet Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus') in the form of festival dances called *vyhin ovec v polonynu*, i.e., "bringing sheep to the mountain pasture."

Returning to St. George, it is important to recall the fact that he was also believed to be the protector of forest animals. Subcarpathian lore includes a number of legends about "St. George's sessions." It was believed that St. George would convene all the animals and birds of the forest on his holiday, and would allot to each of them its hunting region and amount of prey. Should some of the animals or some of the demonic beings of the forest disobey his rulings, St. George himself would ride in armor on a white horse across every mountain, lowland, and *polonyna*, and severely punish all transgressors. Incidentally, the image of St. George clad in armor and riding on a white horse, is one of

the most frequent motifs appearing in folk icons. How seriously the punishing power of St. George was taken in connection with his role as protector of forest animals is attested by the fact that on St. George's Day experienced shepherds even allowed wolves and other animals of prey to take away sheep from their flock. It was feared that if the shepherds tried to prevent the beasts from using this "privilege" bestowed on them by St. George, the animals would be permitted by him to assault the flock throughout the whole season.

The question arises why it should be precisely St. George who in the eyes of the people became the patron saint of nature or, to put it in more modern terms, the protector of ecological balance? According to Christian legend, St. George, shortly before his death as a martyr in Nicomedia in 303 A.D., visited the territory of present-day Libya where he overpowered a dragon and saved an innocent girl from becoming the dragon's victim. The parallel between this heroic feat and similar feats of fairytale heroes, symbolizing the people's wish for victory of good over evil, certainly contributed to the quick domestication of the St. George legend among Carpatho-Rusyns. However, the pre-Christian pagan prototype remained and was reflected in the fact that in the interpretation of the people St. George was stripped of his Christian holiness and endowed with properties which were in keeping with pre-Christian tradition. As a result, he was transformed into a protector of nature and all living things in the broadest sense of the word. Thus, among the Subcarpathian Huculs, St. George appears as "God's son" who created "heaven and earth" and who releases snakes from the earth, summons migratory birds, "drops" the morning dew on the land, etc. This "dew of St. George" was believed to be endowed with magical powers. Young girls would wash themselves with it in order to be beautiful, and so would all adults — to keep their health strong ("so that their heads and hands would not ache"). In some localities the "dew of St. George" was collected into bottles and used as a medicine.

St. George was also believed by Carpatho-Rusyns to be the protector of crops. Therefore, until recently religious processions with banners and icons (icons of St. George, of course, predominating) could be seen on St. George's Day heading for the fields with prayers to the saint for the protection of crops from hail, storms, fires, and other disasters.

One of the indicators of the popularity of St. George's Day and the importance attached to the saint by the Rusyns is the fact that the Bojkos in Subcarpathian Rus' used to combine the above-mentioned customs with customs transferred to St. George's Day from other holidays such as Easter, Pentecost, and St. Andrew's Day, which included dousing, decorating houses with green branches, prophesying one's luck in love, and so on. It is also worth mentioning in this connection that George (Juraj, Jura, Jurko, Georgij) used to be the most widespread name among Carpatho-Rusyns. Even today, among Rusyns repatriated in 1945 to Czechoslovakia (western Bohemia) from their settlements in Romania, and whose adherence to old traditions was extraordinarily strong, the name George is fairly predominant. The Orthodox Church register in the village of Lesna (district of Tachov in Western Bohemia) records 30 Georges out of 99 boys born there in the period 1950-1954, though admittedly the frequency of this name is now tending to fall.

Mykola Mušynka
Prešov, Czechoslovakia

SEARCH FOR ROOTS
Part III — Our Part in Preserving the Past

When I initially wrote about conducting a search for our Rusyn roots, I asked you to accompany me on a journey in which we would explore the resources available to genealogists. Perhaps now it is time to pause and reflect upon what *we* can do to preserve the past.

Looking at the results of my successful trips to the National Archives, one phrase kept coming to mind. I first heard the phrase in the introductory film shown in the Archives research area and later read it in countless books on writing a family history: Begin With Yourself!

Often the current generation does not realize the value of recording family information of the present day. There is a respect for the past that surpasses interest in the present day. What can we do to correct this oversight? Develop an appreciation for contemporary history. By recording what happens today, we will keep future generations from finding themselves in our position, one of constantly searching for information.

There is also a tendency to look towards Europe for our roots. Many people fail to realize that we can look back upon a rich past in this country. Our immigrant ancestors took an active role in church history and fraternal organizations, participated in two world wars, and were involved in politics. The sons and daughters of these immigrants often remember much of what occurred during the early years of Rusyn life in America. It is also interesting to note that in many cases, customs and songs brought by Rusyn immigrants to this country have been preserved virtually unchanged to this day. For example, songs popular with Rusyns in Habura (northeastern Slovakia) today reflect the Slovak and Ukrainian assimilation that is taking place, yet these songs have remained unchanged in the American context from the time they first arrived here with our ancestors. In effect, what we have seen here in this country is a window to our European past.

It is obvious that there is more to genealogy and roots than a simple family tree. It is much more interesting to know about the personalities and lives of the people on that tree. We are fortunate that it is still not too late to record this information for future generations. What we remember of the stories we have heard is certainly a strong enough basis upon which to build a family history. And remember, a family history does not necessarily have to be complete to be of value. Often a good general picture can be achieved from a collection of scattered memories.

How to Write Your Own Life Story: A Step by Step Guide for the Non-Professional Writer by Lois Daniel (Chicago Review Press, 1980) is an informative book which provides the novice with good ideas and inspiration. The author suggests that individuals record their memories in looseleaf notebooks. When you feel thus inclined, jot down your thoughts. The key is to ask yourself the right questions, that is, questions which will jar your memory. You may remember some traditions, family sayings, folk beliefs, or incidents involving you or a member of your family. Once you recall something write it down. Do not trust your memory. Use separate pages for each idea. This will allow you to arrange the stories in a logical order at a later date.

Frequently these stories remain unwritten because peo-

ple feel that they lack writing ability. Do not let this thought hinder you. Write as you speak — simply and directly. Future generations will be so thrilled to read about their past that they will certainly not judge your writing skills too harshly. If you are interested in taking on this project — start now! It is something you can work on while you wait for answers to your letters to relatives in Europe or plan your trip to the National Archives.

Another way of obtaining information to be included in a family history is to look at local histories and historical time frames. By placing a family unit in its proper location and point in time, it is possible to reconstruct a story even if precise information about individuals is not known. Were their lives colored by World War I in Europe or the Depression years in this country? My paternal grandparents came from Habura, a village first settled in the thirteenth century. Perhaps someone has written a history of this area. My maternal grandmother had mentioned fighting in her native village, Nowy Sącz, at the western extremity of the Lemkian Region just north of the Carpathians in present-day Poland. I later learned of the Battle of Limanowa which took place roughly twenty kilometers northwest of her village. The fighting had been part of the First World War. My maternal grandfather had been a coal miner in Simpson, a small town in northeastern Pennsylvania. Stories of miners' strikes and feuding between the new Eastern European immigrants and the older, more established Irish immigrants give added insight into what his life must have been like during his first years in this country.

Relatives are a storehouse of information. By asking specific questions, it is possible to stir long forgotten memories. Often bits and pieces of information never came to the surface only because someone never thought to ask the right questions. Questions must be specific and thought provoking. "What do you remember about your youth?" Such a vague inquiry will elicit only a vague response. However, "what was your relationship with your immigrant parents" will most likely bring an emotional response and a few anecdotes. There are many books available on interviewing techniques which include examples of specific questions. *Family Folklore: Interviewing Guide and Questionnaire* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979) is an excellent, inexpensive booklet. This work discusses ethical considerations, use of a tape recorder, and possible questions, as well as covering other topics. Perhaps at the next family gathering your relatives would be willing to help you in your research by filling out a questionnaire. Encourage them to help by offering them a copy of your research when it is completed. Old pictures and scrapbooks often act as catalysts in restoring memories. Always remember to include with each piece of information obtained the name of the source, approximate date of the event, location of the event, and full names of the people involved. This will help you keep accurate records and allow you to return to the source if you have additional questions or need to double-check the information.

Consider using the acid-free paper so popular with serious genealogists for recording information. This paper is relatively inexpensive and deteriorates at a much slower rate than regular paper with a high acid content. Such paper will add considerable years of life to the manuscript.

In case you need more incentive to begin your family history, the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., gladly accepts family histories, and the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) will keep a copy of your family tree on microfilm in their vaults in Utah indefinitely. Let us make use of these unique opportunities.

Roots are not lost forever; rather, they are just waiting to be discovered. Good luck with your research!

Patricia A. Onufrak
McLean, Virginia

RUSYN FORUM

Passaic, N.J. On January 29, 1984, Bishop Michael J. Dudick announced a new diocesan program entitled "Preserving Our Past" in an effort to develop and expand further the Heritage Institute of the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Passaic and the Diocesan Library. The purpose of the program is to impress upon members of the diocese the necessity of knowing and preserving their religious and ethnic heritage. The Diocesan Heritage Institute and Library will be housed in the new Diocesan Center in West Paterson, New Jersey, scheduled for construction during 1984.

Pittsburgh, Pa. On February 11, 1984, Carpatho-Rusyns were represented at a day-long educational fair sponsored by the Pittsburgh Genealogical Society. Held at historic Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Pittsburgh, the fair afforded people of all ethnic backgrounds the opportunity to learn about resources available in researching their ethnic backgrounds. The Carpatho-Rusyn display, which included original artifacts from Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathia), as well as Rusyn genealogical resources available in both Europe and America, was organized and staffed by Mary Ann Gallo, a Galician Rusyn from Monessen, Pennsylvania.

New York, N.Y. On March 16, 1984, the Julian Revay Carpatho-Ukrainian Research Center sponsored a commemorative meeting dedicated to the 45th anniversary of the proclamation of independence of Carpatho-Ukraine. The meeting was attended by leaders of various Ukrainian organizations in New York City.

Pittsburgh, Pa. On May 25-27, 1984, the Rusyn community was once again ably represented at the 28th Annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival. Large crowds applauded the Slavjane Folk Ensemble as they performed a scene from a Carpatho-Rusyn wedding, beginning with the arrival of the guests at the reception and concluding with an exuberant bridal dance. The accompanying display featured a wedding scene, consisting of traditional wedding costumes and other items related to the betrothal and marriage ceremonies. Jerry Jumba gave impromptu talks on Rusyn history and culture which attracted an interested audience. Lorenz and Shirley Bosonjak demonstrated the art of wood block carving and print making. A Carpatho-Rusyn kitchen featured numerous Rusyn culinary delights, including the popular *nalesniky* (potato pancakes).

OUR FRONT COVER

Children in prayer before a wayside cross, Hutsul region, Subcarpathian Rus', circa 1920.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILWAUKEE
WISCONSIN
Permit No. 1744

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Published four times a year by the
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Fairview, New Jersey

Editor: **Patricia A. Krafcik**
Associate Editor: **Andrew G. Kovaly**
Assistant Editor: **Patricia A. Onufrak**
Business Manager: **Steve Mallick**

Communications concerning content should be sent to:

Patricia A. Krafcik, Editor
Department of Slavic Languages
University of Pittsburgh
Loeffler Building 120
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Annual subscription: $7.00
To subscribe, send check or money order to:

Carpatho-Rusyn American
5485 Forest Glen Road
North Madison, Ohio 44057

CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Vol. VII, No. 4 Winter, 1984

FROM OUR CENTER

After seven years, Patricia A. Krafčik is moving from her position as editor of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. While pursuing a doctorate in Russian literature and teaching at Columbia University in New York, she became involved with the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* at its inception in the spring of 1978. After completing her doctorate, she accepted a position as assistant professor with the Department of Slavic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at the University of Pittsburgh. Despite additional responsibilities, she continued to devote a great deal of time to the newsletter. Her interest in Slavic studies, specifically folklore, led her to study in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia during the summers of 1981, 1982, and 1983. She most recently completed a ten-month study tour in Czechoslovakia on an International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) grant for scholarly research in Eastern Europe.

Our profound thanks to you, Pat, for the generous contribution of your time, expertise, and dedication to the task of promoting our Carpatho-Rusyn identity in the United States. Your efforts have served to educate us about our past, both in this country and in the homeland, support us in our current efforts to maintain our rich heritage, and encourage us to continue this trend in the years ahead. We are pleased you will remain involved with the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* as consultant, and we look forward to your continued participation in the future. On behalf of our readers and our staff, we thank you again and wish you and your family (including your new addition Alexandra Christine), peace, health, and happiness for many years. *Na mnohaja i blahaja l'ita!*

We are pleased to announce that with this issue, Patricia A. Onufrak will assume the position of editor. She has been a member of our staff since May 1983. As assistant editor, she coordinated recent, current, and future events in her column, "Rusyn Forum," and also initiated a series of articles on genealogical research entitled "Search For Roots." As a third generation Rusyn American, Patricia Onufrak attributes the interest in her heritage to the relationship during early childhood with her maternal immigrant grandparents. Frequent visits to their home in northeastern Pennsylvania had a profound effect, instilling a love of Slavic people and more specifically her Carpatho-Rusyn heritage.

Born and raised in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, the interest in her heritage led to travel to areas with more active immigrant/ethnic communities. After receiving a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and a Master's degree in Russian language and literature from the University of Toronto in Canada, she returned to her home in McLean, Virginia, where she currently resides.

Patricia Onufrak looks forward to doing her part in making available through this newsletter knowledge about Carpatho-Rusyns and their heritage in Europe and America. We wish her well in these efforts and offer our encouragement and support.

IN MEMORIAM

On September 30, 1984, the American Carpatho-Rusyn community lost a great friend and leader when Bishop John Martin died unexpectedly at the age of 53. Since 1966, he had served as a bishop of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese, based in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and since 1977 he had been the ruling bishop of that diocese.

Bishop John contributed greatly to his diocese through his knowledge, compassion, and love of his people. He fostered pride among his flock in their Carpatho-Rusyn heritage, a pride that flourished during his episcopacy, particularly among the young. Because of that pride, numerous Carpatho-Rusyn performing ensembles and dance groups were born in recent times in a number of his parishes. Cultural displays and education about the history, religion, and lives of the Carpatho-Rusyns were fostered.

As both a spiritual and cultural leader, Bishop John Martin will be missed. Our condolences to his family and friends. May his memory be eternal. *Vičnaja jemu pamjat'.*

John Righetti

A THANK YOU TO CONTRIBUTORS

The *Carpatho-Rusyn American* gratefully acknowledges the many donations made by readers. Special thanks to Mike Uram (Dearborn Heights, Michigan) — $43.00; Joseph Kupcha (Chula Vista, California) — $25.00; Paul Metro (Clark, New Jersey) — $25.00; Maria Kasianchuk (Troy, New York) — $20.00; and Margaret Murvay (Berlin Center, Ohio) — $20.00. Our deepest appreciation goes to George Billy (Cleveland, Ohio) for his very generous donation of $100.00. All contributions, whether small or large, help us to continue publishing the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, and they are, of course, tax-deductible. Our warmest thanks to all of you for your generous support.

TRANSCARPATHIA TODAY

John Righetti, director of the Carpathian Youth Choir and Dancers of Monessen, Pennsylvania, is offering a slide presentation on his recent trip to Transcarpathia.

Any organization in western Pennsylvania, nearby Ohio or West Virginia interested in this presentation may contact Mr. Righetti at (412) 761-0651.

OUR FRONT COVER

In the forests of far eastern Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus').

ANTONÍN HARTL (1885-1944)

Among those who in the period between the two world wars pioneered research into the literature of the Carpatho-Rusyns, certainly one of the most outstanding personalities was the Czech literary scholar Antonín Hartl. A man with a remarkable theoretical background, Hartl had a wide knowledge of a number of European literatures and originally had attained a reputation for his numerous monographs on the history of Czech literature. The incorporation of Subcarpathian Rus' into the newly-formed Czechoslovak republic after World War I stimulated his interest in the cultural and especially literary activities of the Rusyn people. It was to Rusyn literature that he paid the most scholarly attention during his mature years, and his contribution in this field certainly deserves to be remembered.

Hartl was born on December 11, 1885 on a small farm in Kunovice in western Bohemia, where in the near-by town of Klatovy he finished his *gymnasium* (high school) education. During university studies in Prague, where he came in 1906, the young Hartl became an enthusiastic follower of the philosophical ideas of the then professor at Charles University and later first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. In 1912, Hartl obtained his Ph.D. degree and became a researcher in the Czech Academy of Arts and Sciences in Prague. After World War I, he became editor of the leading daily *Čas*, and in 1923 was appointed director of the press section of the Czechoslovak foreign ministry. Later, he was named editor of the government-sponsored weekly *Prager Rundschau*, which was aimed at promoting Czechoslovak interests in German-speaking Central Europe. Finally, in 1931, he became head of the library of the foreign ministry. With the occupation of Prague by the Nazis in 1939, Hartl remained a librarian, having been transferred to the University Library in Prague, but because he was known to be a convinced democrat and a former high Czechoslovak official, he spent his last years of life under the watchful eyes of the Gestapo. This situation must have further aggravated his poor health, and he died of tuberculosis on February 19, 1944.

In spite of his involvement in journalism and in responsible posts in the foreign ministry, Hartl's preoccupation with Rusyn culture remained strong throughout the twenty years of the first Czechoslovak republic. In 1923, he published three important books on the Rusyn issue: *Osnovy ruskoji narodnoji i kulturnoji polytyky* (The Foundations of Rusyn National and Cultural Politics), *K jazykové otazce podkarpatoruské* (On the Language Question of Subcarpathian Rus'), and *Jazyk a písemnictví na Podkarpatské Rusi* (The Language and Literature in Subcarpathian Rus'), works which at the time provided the most complete outline of the basic aspects of the Rusyn position in Czechoslovakia. That same year also saw the appearance of Hartl's valuable study about the nineteenth-century Rusyn national awakener Aleksander Duchnovyč, *Národní básník podkarpatských Rusínů* (The National Poet of Subcarpathian Rusyns), comparing his role in the development of Rusyn culture with that of the leading contemporary Czech and Slovak national awakeners.

In 1924, there followed another important book, *Kulturní život osvobozené Podkarpatské Rusi* (The Cultural Life of the Liberated Subcarpathian Rus'), in which he dealt in detail with the postwar development of the Rusyn educational system and journalism. Turning to an earlier period, Hartl surveyed in an article the Hungarian oppression in the former Habsburg empire in "Podkarpatští Rusíni za valky a za převratu" (The Subcarpathian Rusyns in the War and in the National Revolution, 1925).

Hartl's extensive research into modern Rusyn Literary history came to fruition in his 1931 study, *Literární obrození podkarpatských Rusínů v letech 1920-1930* (The literary Revival of Subcarpathian Rusyns, 1920-1930). This was and still is the most detailed study of Rusyn literary activities during that period. Combining a scholarly approach with popular appeal (the study includes rare photographs of the Rusyn writers in question and a number of items of human interest), the book also discusses Ukrainian and Russian émigré writers living at the time in Subcarpathian Rus'. Well aware of the complexity of the language problem in Subcarpathian writing — most works of the time were written either in Ukrainian or in Russian — Hartl did not side with any of the feuding camps in the language dispute and evaluated the works strictly on the basis of their aesthetic value.

An even wider scope is covered in Hartl's next study, "Písemnictví podkarpatských Rusinů" (The Literature of the Subcarpathian Rusyns), which appeared in the 1933 volume of the authoritative thematic Czechoslovak encyclopedia, *Československá vlastivěda*. This was the first compre-

hensive history of Rusyn literature from its very beginnings. Hartl divided Rusyn literary history into three periods: the old period — from the fourteenth to sixteenth century; the middle period — from the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century; and the new period — from the late eighteenth century to the present. The study also included an outline of the literature of Rusyns living abroad, mainly in Russia and Hungary, as well as a discussion of works by Ukrainian and Russian émigrés living in Subcarpathian Rus'. This survey was no mere listing of authors and works, but the first aesthetic analysis of Rusyn literary production. Applying aesthetic criteria, Hartl valued most enthusiastically the works of Aleksander Duchnovyč and, among contemporary writers, Vasyl' Grendža-Dons'kyj.

In 1936, Hartl prepared two studies as part of a semi-official deluxe Czech-language volume entitled *Podkarpatská Rus.* His "Přehled literárního hnutí na Podkarpatské Rusi" (A Survey of the Literary Movement in Subcarpathian Rus') presented an even more detailed analysis of contemporary Rusyn writers, especially Grendža-Dons'kyj, J. Boršoš-Kumjats'kyj, M. Božuk, A. Karabeleš, L. Demjan, A. Markuš, and I. Nevyc'kyj. Hartl also mentioned the Rusyn-American writer Emilij Kubek, expressing regret that the American Rusyns with their wide network of periodicals and a number of talented writers showed at the time little willingness to help the development of literature in their old country. The second study in the 1936 volume, "Podkarpatská Rus v české literatuře" (Subcarpathian Rus' in Czech Literature), traced Subcarpathian themes in the works of such leading Czech writers as Ivan Olbracht, Karel Čapek, Stanislav K. Neumann, Vladislav Vančura, Z. M. Kuděj, and Josef Spilka. Hartl argued that the main reason for the frequency of these themes in Czech literature was the fact that "Subcarpathian Rus' had become for Czech literature a similar source of inspiration as overseas territories are for the literatures of larger European nations, that is, an exotic country in which everything is different from the life-styles and culture of their own respective countries." In 1937, Hartl updated his previous studies of contemporary Rusyn literature in an article "Písemnictví Podkarpatských Rusinů XX. století" (The Twentieth Century Literature of Subcarpathian Rusyns). Two years later, this was followed by another sequel, "Soudobé básnictví na Karpatské Ukrajině" (Contemporary Poetry in the Carpatho-Ukraine).

Antonín Hartl was not only a scholar, he also did much to popularize Rusyn writing among the Czechs. There was hardly a single leading Czech intellectual periodical in which he had not published numerous translations from the works of contemporary Subcarpathian Rusyn writers or in which he reviewed scholarly works about Rusyns. As part of his popularizing efforts, he edited the first anthology of Subcarpathian literature in Czech, *Pozdravení Rusínů* (A Greeting from the Rusyns). The anthology included extracts from the works of 15 poets and 12 prose writers from the years 1920-1935, as well as a poem by the gifted Rusyn-American belletrist E. Kubek. As translator, Hartl can be said to have rendered the spirit of the original works with extreme success. Later on, Hartl compiled and translated an even more ambitious anthology, *V Karpatech svítá* (The Sun Rises in the Carpathians), embracing Rusyn poetry from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, the Nazi occupation of Bohemia-Moravia made publication impossible, and the work remains in manuscript to this day.

To appreciate fully Hartl's contribution to the popularization of Subcarpathian literature among his fellow Czechs, it is necessary to mention also his numerous translations and contributions about Subcarpathian Rus' for radio, and his translations of Rusyn plays for the Czech stage. Hartl's articles and studies on Rusyn culture also appeared in several other languages: in the French journal *Le monde slave,* in the Paris based Russian-language periodical *Central'naja Evropa* and in the Prague German-language weekly *Prager Rundschau.* In addition, the German-speaking public of Europe learned about Rusyn literature from Hartl's book, *Die literarische Renaissance der Karpatho-ruthenen* (The Literary Renaissance of the Carpatho-Rusyns, 1932).

For someone so deeply involved in the history and contemporary developments of Rusyn literature, Hartl could not avoid taking a stand on the thorny question of which language should become the standard language for Rusyn literature. His original position on this matter was more or less neutral. But in 1938, in his "K jazykovým sporům na Podkarpatské Rusi" (On the Language Controversy in Subcarpathian Rus'), he expressed a preference for the Rusyn vernacular, which he argued was most easily understood by the Rusyn public. Nonetheless, he thought this to be merely a temporary solution, for he regarded the Rusyns to be a part of the Ukrainian nation, even though they had for long been separated from its nucleus. In his view, use of the vernacular represented a transitional stage in the natural process of gradual amalgamation of the Rusyn dialects with standard Ukrainian.

Unfortunately, time has been less than just to Hartl's efforts. His death in 1944 passed almost unnoticed, with only two specialized Czech periodicals — *Naše věda* and *Časopis českých knihovníků* — carrying an obituary. Many of his extremely valuable manuscripts still remain unpublished, and there exists no comprehensive description of Hartl's scholarly career. For instance, the entry on him in the dictionary of Slavic studies published in 1972 in Prague *(Československé práce o jazyce, dějinách a kultuře slovanských národů od roku 1760)* contains only scant information, so that the broadest scholarly coverage of Hartl's work to date can only be found in the bibliographical appendix to Paul R. Magocsi's outstanding 1978 monograph, *The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus' 1848-1948.*

The scarcity of literature on Hartl and especially the general unavailability of many of his works is regrettable for many reasons. One is that Hartl's work still has lasting scholarly value. Another, as the late academician Orest Zilynskyj remarked, is because Hartl was "the only consistent source of information on Carpatho-Rusyn literature for the Czech public." Finally, Hartl's scholarly and popular writings themselves contributed directly to the shaping of Subcarpathian literature during the interwar years. His steady flow of critical analyses did much to compensate for the then still undeveloped state of Rusyn literary criticism.

Mykola Mušynka

Nova dumka (New Idea), Vol. IX, Nos. 24, 25, 26 (Vukovar, Yugoslavia, 1980), 112, 156, 112 pp.

As in previous years, these three issues of *Nova dumka* contain much information on the contemporary life of Rusyns living in the Vojvodina (Bačka) and Srem regions of Yugoslavia. Because a large part of these issues are devoted to two events — the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lenin and the recent death of Tito — there are very few articles on the Rusyn past and cultural heritage. The most useful of these are a translation into Vojvodinian Rusyn of Jan Čaplovič's description from 1825-1831 of Rusyn customs and life in the Carpathians (No. 25) and translations into Croatian of excerpts of works by two Hungarian scholars (Albert Bereghy, Sandor Bonkaló) on the Rusyn political and cultural problem during the interwar period (No. 26).

Penjak, Stepan I. *Rann'oslov" jans'ke i davn'orus'ke naselennja Zakarpattja VI-XIII st.* (Early Slavic and Old Rus' Settlements in Transcarpathia, Sixth to Thirteenth Centuries). Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1980, 180 pp.

Who were the first people to live in Subcarpathia? Were the Rusyns the original population, or did they come after the Magyars who crossed the region at the end of the ninth century? These are questions which have plagued historians since the middle of the nineteenth century. Several different theories have evolved, each with its battery of archeological, linguistic, and historical evidence. The controversy to date is discussed in this well documented Ukrainian-language study.

Despite its title, this study is not limited to Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus'), but rather analyzes the whole upper Tisa region, which includes eastern Slovakia, northeastern Hungary, the Transcarpathian Oblast' of the Ukrainian S.S.R., and northwestern Romania. The bulk of Penjak's analysis is devoted to describing the archeological remains that have been found throughout this territory, especially since World War II.

On the basis of this evidence, the author concludes that the first Slavic settlers in the region were the East Slavic tribe of White Croatians, whose center was north and east of the Carpathians in Galicia and Poltava and who arrived already in the sixth century as a result of the invasion of their territory by the Avars. Later the White Croatian settlements were supplemented by other East Slavic Rus' peoples who came across the Carpathians in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Popova, Lidija I. and Cel'tner, Vladimir P. *Očerki o chudožnikach Sovetskoj Ukrainy* (A Survey of Artists in the Soviet Ukraine). Moscow: Sovetskij chudožnik, 1980, 390 pp.

This handsomely illustrated Russian-language volume contains comprehensive biographies of twenty artists active in recent years in the Soviet Ukraine. Among those included are the important Carpatho-Rusyn painters Andrej A. Kocka (b. 1911), most well known for his portraits of females in traditional dress, and Fedir F. Manajlo (1910-1978), the versatile artist who has left us canvases in the realist, expressionist, fauvist, and abstract styles. Each of the biographies (pp. 126-143 and 200-219) includes a photograph of the artist and good-quality reproductions in color and black-and-white of several of their paintings.

Ruski jazik na Panoniji i Hor'nici (The Rusyn Language in Panonia and the Highlands), Vol. I, No. I (Montreal, 1980), 104 pp.

This is the second journal begun in 1980 by Julijan Kolesar. As with his other publications, the entire text is written by Kolesar in the Vojvodinian Rusyn language. The sixteen articles in this first issue deal with the Rusyn language, especially that used by the population in Yugoslavia. The author argues for the distinct character of the Rusyn language and is particularly critical of those who classify it as a dialect of Ukrainian.

(Available gratis from Julijan Kolesar, 4875 Bourret Avenue, No. 203, Montreal, Quebec H3W 1L2)

Savva, Bishop and Archimandrite Vasiliy, "The 30th Anniversary of the Reunion of the Zakarpatskaya Region Greek Catholics (Uniates) with the Russian Orthodox Church," *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, No. 1 (Moscow, 1980), pp. 21-26.

Bishop Savva of the Orthodox Diocese of Mukačevo and Užhorod and his assistant Archimandrite Vasiliy provide here in a brief and somewhat polemical form the official Russian Orthodox version of religious history in Subcarpathian Rus'. They also give some details on the celebrations held in 1979 at the cathedral in Mukačevo and at the St. Nicholas Convent on Černeča Hora to mark the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in 1949 and the return of the region to the fold of Orthodoxy.

Sersun, I.H., "Rozkvit Zakarpattja za roky radjans'koji vlady" (The Blossoming of Transcarpathia During the Years of Soviet Rule), *Ukrajins'kyj istoryčnyj žurnal*, XXIV, 6 (Kiev, 1980), pp. 47-54.

This brief article reveals the social and economic transformations that have taken place in Subcarpathian Rus' since 1945. The underlying theme is that prosperity in the region was only made possible because of the establishment of a Communist system of government.

Sirka, Josef. *Rozvytok nacional'noji svidomosty lemkiv Prjašivščyny u svitli ukrajins'koji chudožn'oji literatury Čechoslovaččyny* (The Development of National Consciousness Among the Lemkos in the Prešov Region as Reflected in the Ukrainian Literature of Czechoslovakia). Ukrajins'kyj Vil'nyj Universytet: Monohrafiji, Vol. XXXI. Munich, 1980, 191 p.

This monograph is a revised version of an earlier English-language book, *The Development of Ukrainian Literature in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1975,* published in 1978 (see the *C-RA*, Vol. III, No. 3, p. 7). In both volumes, most of the discussion surveys the work of individual poets and prose writers grouped according to three generations: the older (pre- and post-World War II), middle, and younger.

The extensive chapters on literary production are preceded by a general description of the nationality question among the Rusyns of the Prešov Region (southern Lemkos in the terminology of the author) since the establishment of

the Czechoslovak republic in 1918. As in the earlier English-language volume, this book also includes extensive footnotes; an index; résumés in German, French, English, and Spanish; and a rich bibliography that is particularly valuable for its comprehensive listing of works by belletrists.

Stebila, Petro. *Nezabutni roky* (The Unforgettable Years). Bratislava and Prešov: Slovac'ke pedahohične vyd., viddil ukrajins'koji literatury, 1980, 262 pp.

These are the Ukrainian-language memoirs of a peasant from near Snina in the Prešov Region, who lived in Subcarpathian Rus' during the interwar period and then fled to the Soviet Union during World War II. There he joined the Czechoslovak Corps, which returned with the Red Army in 1944-1945 to drive the Germans out of Czechoslovakia. The author was a member of the Communist party, and he provides information about that organization as well as about Carpatho-Rusyns who fought in the Czechoslovak Corps.

Švetlosc, Vol. XVIII, Nos. 1-6 (Novi Sad, 1980), 512 pp.

As with other volumes of *Švetlosc*, this one contains primarily new literary works (prose, poetry, drama) by Vojvodinian Rusyn writers in Yugoslavia. There are also several articles on contemporary Yugoslav society and a whole issue (No. 3) devoted to the deceased Yugoslav Communist leader, Marshall Josef Broz Tito. Of particular interest for Carpatho-Rusyn studies is an article on literary works written in Rusyn by the local national leader Havrijil Kostel'nyk (1886-1948) by Julijan Tamaš (No. 2); a collection of heretofore unpublished documents compiled by Mykola Cap on the establishment of the first Vojvodinian Rusyn cultural society (Ruske Narodne Prosvitne Družtvo) in 1919 (No. 4); and Mykola Skuban's survey of the activity of the Rusyn amateur theater Djadja between 1970 and 1980 (No. 6).

Tkáč, Štefan. *Ikony zo 16.-19. storočia na severovýchodnom Slovensku* (Icons from the 16th to 19th Centuries in Northeastern Slovakia). Bratislava: Tatran, 1980, 280 pp.

This collection of 70 color and 202 black-and-white photographs by Miroslav Jurík with an introductory study on icon painting by Stefan Tkáč and design by Milan Veselý is the most comprehensive book with the highest-quality reproductions and design of any published to date on Carpatho-Rusyn religious painting. The icons are taken from iconostases found in wooden churches as well as from a few museums, especially the rich collection of the Šariš Museum in Bardejov. Each icon is reproduced in color with several pages of details in black-and-white. Descriptions of each icon are provided in an appendix printed in four languages: Slovak, Russian, English, and German. The Slovak introduction also has brief résumés in Russian, English, and German.

The extensive introduction by S. Tkáč (pp. 9-78) provides a discussion of the technical aspects of icon production in eastern Slovakia (the Prešov Region) followed by an analysis of the religious content and stylistic changes, especially after the seventeenth century. The author stresses that these are "eastern Slovak" icons only in the present-day territorial sense, although he perhaps overemphasizes the supposed complex ethnic composition of the area (Slovaks, Rusyns, Germans, Magyars, even Serbs and Bulgars) at the expense of the Rusyn element and environment in which the vast majority of icons are found. The author has also provided a lexicon of technical terms (with Slovak translations) and a bibliography of works on the subject.

Trojan, M. V. and Čičur, A. A., "Vozz"jednannja Zakarpattja z Radjans'koju Ukrajinoju u skladi SRSR—toržestvo istoryčnoji spravedlyvosti" (The Reunification of Transcarpathia into the Body of the Soviet Union — A Great Celebration for Historical Justice), *Ukrajins'kyj istoryčnyj žurnal*, XXIV, 6 (Kiev, 1980), pp. 40-46.

This is one of two articles published in an issue of the official historical journal of the Soviet Ukrainian Academy of Sciences to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the incorporation of Subcarpathian Rus' into the Soviet Ukraine. The brief article presents the official Soviet version of how the incorporation process took place, under the leadership of local Communists and the protection of the Red Army, during the months of late 1944 and early 1945.

Tvorčosc: hlasnjik družtva za ruski jazik i literaturu (Works: Organ of the Society for Rusyn Language and Literature), Vol. VI (Novi Sad, 1980), 125 pp.

With this volume of *Tvorčosc*, the Society for Rusyn Language and Literature in Yugoslavia's Vojvodina (Bačka) celebrates its tenth anniversary. Besides introductory statements on the Society's anniversary (by Djura Varga) and its future tasks (by Djura Latjak), there are also eight studies on Vojvodinian Rusyn language and literature, two documentary works, and a chronicle of the Society's recent activity. The most extensive studies are on the vowel system in Vojvodinian Rusyn (by Mitar Pešikan) and important documents (compiled by Janko Ramač) on the personnel and budget of Ruski Kerestur's schools during the nineteenth century.

FOLK CUSTOMS OF CARPATHO-RUSYNS SUMMER FESTIVALS: ST. JOHN'S DAY

The summer months represented for the Carpatho-Rusyns the period of the most intensive work in the fields, and accordingly the customs of these months were not as rich as the customs practiced in winter or spring. The central festival of the summer period was connected with St. John's Day which falls on June 24. The saint was variably called Jan, Ioan, or Kupala, and the festival itself in some places had the name of Ivanden' — John's Day. It was a summer solstice festival, occurring when the sun reached its highest point and resulting in the year's longest day and shortest night. It was also the highest point for the crops, signaling the arrival of the most important event in the peasant's year-round schedule — the harvest.

It is perhaps no wonder that plants, and not only agricultural plants, were believed to be endowed with magical powers exactly at this time of the year. Women and girls would collect various herbs before sunrise, and having had them consecrated in church, they would keep them in their households until the next year. Most frequently the plants were hung near the icons, and since they were believed to have magical powers, the herbs would be used both for medical

treatment and for magic rites. Sometimes the "St. John herbs" (*zilja*) would be tied with a whip in the hope that the symbolic gesture would help keep the cattle in the pasture together.

Of the many herbs used in Rusyn folk medicine the most popular were *ivanok* (Hypericum perforatum), *devjatsyl* (Inula Helenium), *odylja* (Valeriana officinalis), *mjata* (Menta piporita), *rumjanok* (Matriria chamomila), and *zvirobij* (Hypericum perforatum). Even some poisonous herbs were used for curative purposes, such as *rostopast'* (Chelidonium majus) and *nadragulja* (Atropa belladona).

The eve of St. John's Day was a special day for the boys and girls of the village. They would meet at a particular place, usually at a hill above the village where they would make a bonfire, sing songs connected with St. John's Day, dance, and generally make merry. This custom known as *sobitka* was most widespread in the western part of the Prešov Region. In the village of Jakubany near the district town of Stará L'ubovňa, the custom is alive even today. The local boys dip torches in pitch, light them, and then walk with them up to the nearest hills where they start several imposing bonfires. Soon thereafter they are joined by village girls bringing each a bundle of straw with which to feed the fire. The ring of bonfires surrounding the village offers a truly unforgettable sight. In some villages in the past the bonfires were used also for burning discarded objects such as birch rods, baskets, straw binders, etc., in what was a symbolic purification of old bad habits. Also burned in the bonfires were the last year's "St. John's herbs." The *sobitka* celebrations in the village of Kružl'ov near Bardejov also included the interesting custom of rolling a burning wheel wrapped in straw down to the village in a symbolic imitation of the movement of the sun.

An indispensable part of the festivities were the special *sobitka* songs. One of their most frequent themes were the requests addressed to St. John for a good harvest. As one of the songs recorded in the village of Makovica near Svidník would have it:

A tŷ, Jane, švatŷj Jane,
Ošvet že nam šyre pole,
Šyre pole i pašnycju,
Žyto, oves i pšenicju.

And you, John, St. John,
Bless our broad fields,
Broad fields and the pastures,
Rye, oats and wheat.

Another group of *sobitka* songs dealt with the joys and sorrows linked with love. Often these songs would make public even the more profane love secrets, such as the pregnancy of an unmarried girl, like the following song recorded in the village of Becherov near Bardejov:

A na Jana, na Jakuba,
Kapral'ova Marča hruba.
A od koho? Ta od toho
Od Jožka Leščyšynoho.

On St. John's Day, on St. James' Day
Mary Kapral' came with child.
By whom? By him
— Joe Leščyšyn.

Another related theme of the *sobitka* songs was the mutual teasing between boys and girls. As research into the village customs of the past attests, the St. John's festivities were one of those exceptional occasions when a certain amount of sexual freedom was tolerated. The fact that the freedom sometimes went too far found its expression also in the lyrics of some of these songs recorded in the village of Kružl'ov near Bardejov:

Na Ivana, na Kupala,
Hanča kabat zal'uštala,
Neznala ho vyrajbaty,
Musyla ho chlapcom daty.
Chlopcy kabat postelili,
A Hanču vinka zbavyly.

On St. John's Day
Annie soiled her skirt
She did not know how to wash it,
And so gave it to the boys.
They spread the skirt,
And stripped Annie of her virtue.

Some of the other customs connected with St. John's Day were, nevertheless, more serious in intent. After finishing the *sobitka* festivities, for instance, girls would throw wreaths into the stream in order to learn more about their future: the girl whose wreath was taken away the farthest by the stream was expected to marry the soonest. In another custom, young people would leap over fire with a double purpose: to purify their souls symbolically, and to "draw" from the fire the strength needed for the forthcoming harvest.

Among other things, the night of St. John's Day (like the nights of some other important days) was also believed to be the night of witches (*bosorkanja*). In many villages, legends were told about the "annual meetings" of the witches at imaginary places like "Black Mountain," "Bald Mountain," and "Devil's Hill." These meetings were believed to serve the purpose of accepting new arrivals into the witches' ranks and dividing the domains of their activity among themselves. Yarns were spun about the orgies which were supposed to accompany the meetings. According to legends many other strange things happened on that night: treasures hidden in the earth came to light (almost literally, because their appearance was first announced by fires bursting out on the surface); ferns began to blossom; trees would start to speak among themselves and move from place to place, etc.

After World War II, most customs connected with St. John's Day, especially the lighting of bonfires, ceased to be practiced. Recently, however, some of them have been revived on the initiative of folklore groups and with the endorsement of various cultural organizations. This revived tradition has, of course, a merely entertaining value, with the belief in the magic implications of the customs no longer extant. (*To be continued*)

Mykola Mušynka
Prešov, Czechoslovakia

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILWAUKEE
WISCONSIN
Permit No. 1744

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

Published four times a year by the
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Fairview, New Jersey

Editor: **Patricia A. Onufrak**
Associate Editor: **Andrew G. Kovaly**
Consulting Editor: **Patricia A. Krafcik**
Business Manager: **Steve Mallick**

Communications concerning content should be sent to:

Patricia A. Onufrak, Editor
Carpatho-Rusyn American
1718 Linwood Place
McLean, Virginia 22101

Annual subscription: $7.00
To subscribe, send check or money order to:

Carpatho-Rusyn American
5485 Forest Glen Road
North Madison, Ohio 44057